



**THE END OF
INTERNATIONAL
ADOPTION?**
P.48

**HIP HOP IS
SO
GAY**
P.65



**THE INTERN
WHO
SAVED
SHREDDIES**
P.41

**CAN
'TRAILER
PARK
HILLARY'
WIN?**
P.32

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WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?

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THIS WEEK

- 20-IT'S STILL ON TOP**
Kate Winslet talks to legend-ary actor William Shatner about his career, his comeback, being a father, and whether or not he is thinking of retiring.
- 21-COLUMBUS**
10-CAPITAL DUEL
Michael Ruppel on an evening at 24 Sussex with Laurent Hénin, Jeanne Babin, two senators, and one member plus what the PM got for his birthday.
- 22-ANDREW COYNE**
When it comes to limits on election spending, restrictions should be placed on individuals, not parties, on contributions, not spending.
- 23-PAUL WELLS**
Stephen Harper wants to be prime minister for a long time. To truly understand his ambitions, consider the long road and achievements of William Lyon Mackenzie King.
- 24-ANDREW POTTER**
After decades of mindlessly making transfer payments to other provinces, Ontarians have finally woken up to the fact that the program needs to be re-evaluated.
- 25-IT'S HOT**
The real estate market might be cooling, but "house porn" is hotter than ever.
- 26-STEP**
How to find peace after choosing not to live with your kids.
- 27-Stage**
South Pacific is back on Broadway, still relevant and still fun.
- 28-Books**
One wacky link's mission to unearth the secrets of Ancient China.
- 29-Nature**
An obsession over a paint shade.
- 30-Music**
An insider exposes a big name in hip-hop-beating rap.
- 31-Festivals**
What really happened during Oprah's perfectly orchestrated visit with Tom Cruise.
- 32-The Cure**
Guy Bonaparte, 1952-2008.
- 33-SHOW ME THE MONEY!**
A Quebec woman wants the courts to know that she never meant to murder her husband, apparently we really are richer than we think.

MACLEAN'S

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2 From the Editors 4 Mail Bag 9 Screen Days

MAY 19-26, 2008

Timothy McEneaney and her husband adopted Alyssa from China.

- THE BACK PAGES**
- 34-TV**
The real estate market might be cooling, but "house porn" is hotter than ever.
- 35-Step**
How to find peace after choosing not to live with your kids.
- 36-Stage**
South Pacific is back on Broadway, still relevant and still fun.
- 37-Books**
One wacky link's mission to unearth the secrets of Ancient China.
- 38-Nature**
An obsession over a paint shade.
- 39-Music**
An insider exposes a big name in hip-hop-beating rap.
- 40-Festivals**
What really happened during Oprah's perfectly orchestrated visit with Tom Cruise.
- 41-The Cure**
Guy Bonaparte, 1952-2008.
- 42-SHOW ME THE MONEY!**
A Quebec woman wants the courts to know that she never meant to murder her husband, apparently we really are richer than we think.

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32-IMAGE BATTLE
For some working-class voters, Obama is just too smooth. As for Hillary? She's trying her best to showcase a trailer park image.

33-DEAD AIRWAYS
The rise of missing child tourism: India's farmers continue to commit suicide at alarming rates. Radio Free Europe's voice gets muted.

34-DIAMOND BRENDDIES
How a lowly intern turned a well-known but losing brand into a success story and caught the attention of Canada's advertising industry.

35-CHEATING FOR CASH
High finance funds fraudsters who are willing to risk everything to get ahead. Just ask Nick Lesch.

36-PLUG IT IN, BABY
Canada lags for the plug-in car, a Wisconsin newspaper folds to survive on the Web, get ready for not one of "the phantoms of the West".

37-IRISH DOGS A-SMILING
Some 1,500 Canucks are currently studying men abroad. Don't expect them to practise in Canada any time soon.

38-MORIGATOR'S FIGHT
A newly discovered letter to Henry Thoreau shows Henry Thoreau's fierce commitment to legalizing abortion.

39-BABY BUBBLE BURSTS
What says for prospective parents hoping to adopt babies from China can now be as long as eight years, leaving many wondering if they'll ever be able to bring home a child.

40-ALANIS PRAYS FOR RAIN
Scarlett's engagement to ex-Vancouverer Ryan Reynolds, the superstar person in NYC, London's new mayor promises big bucks and Beemers.

MACLEAN'S MAY 19, 2008

WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO SAY?

26 ALANS PRAYS FOR RAIN
Scarlett's engagement to ex-Vancouverite Ryan Reynolds—the stupidest person in NYC, London's new mayor promises big books, and *Beverly Hills*

Development of *Genotype 1 HCV Antibodies* in 1st year patients with liver disease. *Journal of Hepatology*, 2005; 42: 100-105. <http://www.jhepatol.com>



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"The world must support peacemakers. As Rabin said in 1993, "Enough of blood and tears.""

ADVERSITY STRENGTHENS

AFTER BEING REPEATEDLY evicted from their own country by invaders, culturally uprooted from their homelands in Europe on the sudden whim of a local ruler and murdered in gas chambers, the Jewish people have nearly come back to what was originally their own with the prior sanction of the UN ("Why Israel can't survive," *Waskil, May 5*). In spite of all the adversity that bears them, they have managed to retain their language, culture and religion. The toughness, resilience and fierce determination that helped them surmount their trials and tribulations in the past will be the driving force that will make them survive as a nation, thereby defying all odds.

Maria Jacob, Mississauga, Ont.

AS A CANADIAN of Lebanese origin, I am particularly keen to see peace in Israel. As your article showed, the only way to achieve peace without destroying either the Palestinians or the Jews is the two-state principle. Each side has ample reasons to resist or even hate the other. The Arabs have used several times to throw the Jews into chains and they are still promoting anti-Semitism in their schools and media. Israel has been more civilized, but they have often trampled unilaterally on the rights of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

To achieve peace, each side must severely curtail the influence of its extremists. Both sides must come down to their grievances and must pursue peace with an open mind and an open heart. Each side must recognize that the other has suffered more than any people should have to suffer. Egyptian president Anwar El Sadat and Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin were both assassinated for pursuing a just peace. The world must support peacemakers. As Yitzhak Rabin said in September 1995, "Enough of blood and tears. Enough."

Fred Maroon, Ottawa

THE REFUSAL of many Palestinians and large numbers of Muslims worldwide to accept the legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty of their country is the defining geopolitical issue. Israel is generally a great success. It has a growing economy, fine universities and medical centres, and many innovative industries. It has absorbed and enfranchised mil-

lions of previously impoverished and displaced Jews, and accommodated thousands of Arabs. Zionism (support for the Jewish state) may actually be the most successful national movement of the 20th century.

Two neighbours, Egypt and Jordan, have signed peace treaties with Israel, but it remains a small democratic island in a vast sea of dictatorship. Whilst it is important to acknowledge Israel's shortcomings, we must honestly give credit to genuine progress. In view of the historical strength of Israel's enemies, it has overcome great odds, and it will and must survive for all our sakes.

Paul Forsyth, New Westminster, B.C.



THE POINT to consider here is what many analysts seem to continually raise, that the more adversity Israel faces, the stronger it becomes.

Don Schwartz, Toronto

EVER SINCE the 1967 war, Israel has been focused on the ethnic cleansing of the occupied territories. This has become obvious only in recent years because until then we in Canada could not believe that such a free, democratic little country could possibly behave in such a criminal manner. Well, guess what? Israel is a vicious country that makes apartheid South Africa look like a beacon of international law. No, Israel will not survive.

Brian McDonough, Toronto

ONE DOESN'T HAVE to be too bright to see how biased Maclean's is when it comes to

portraying Israel in the innocent party in the Middle East conflict. The truth of the matter is that despite Israel's hard, rapid and energetic toward millions of innocent people who live under its grip. Yet Maclean's chooses the path of manufacturing Canadians about the conflict in this volatile region. By this policy, Maclean's is only doing a disservice to humanity in general and Canadians in particular.

Raman Faruqi, Ingleth, Ont.

THE WORLD HAS NOT known peace since the creation of the state of Israel and we are all paying the price for that ill-conceived and unjustly executed plan. The only hope is for good Jews and Arabs to put their religious differences aside and come together to find a just and lasting solution to the problem. For the sake of the next generation and the peace of the world, I hope that happens soon.

Zoe Houston, Wellington, Ont.

I WAS DISMAYED by the title of this article. It does not reflect the content of the story, which seeks to explain the various challenges and choices facing the country if it wishes to remain both democratic and Jewish. Though the article does pose important editorial questions about the future of the state—questions that are fair—in no way does it conclude that Israel cannot survive.

One wonders what possible purpose Maclean's could have had in sensationalizing the story so profoundly. What would thinking on the part of the editors, or simply a cynical ploy to sell more magazines?

Deborah Corley, Montreal

NO SYMPATHY

I HOPE YOU ARE not expecting much sympathy for Yusef Makhadmeh ("The terrorist who wasn't," *Nationalist, May 5*). Regardless of any law to implement that he may or may not have had, he is still guilty of attempting to smuggle handguns into Canada, for which he received another painful sentence. Were it not for the astute actions of Canada Border Services Agency officers at Fort Erie, Ont., these guns would now be floating around the underworld of Toronto and could have perhaps been used to hurt or even murder people. Where was the anti-gun lobby in all of this? Surely this would have been a good



NAUTICA

Let the parties work it out for themselves



ANDREW COYNE

Tried to get out about this "in and out" business, really I have. But I am often paid by two facts. One, nothing about the Conservatives' shuffling of funds back and forth between the national and local campaigns in the last election appears to me to have been against the law. And two, the law in question is an ass.

To recap: it is not illegal to transfer funds from the national party to a riding association. It is not illegal to transfer funds from a riding association to the party. It is not illegal further out to pool their funds to purchase advertising and other campaign services, and a neat deal if they show them the party. Not illegal, and not unusual: all are common practices in other parties' campaigns. What seems to have Election Canada's inkblots is a belief that the Tories did all of these things at the same time, as because of which responsibility for the spending of the funds somehow passed from the ridings to the party. So what the Conservatives claimed as local expenses were "truly" national.

How the agency acted at this opportunity is not in order as why any of it matters. The Tories gained no particular advantage from the exchange, since in the combined effort, local and national, that makes up campaigns, whatever costs spending they were permitted to engage in at the national level came out of national bookbags. But even calling them "national" or "local" makes little sense, since local campaigns by and large are extensions of the national campaign—the same themes and motifs appear, only with the addition of a candidate's name here and there.

What we are left with is arbitrary division, taken selectively and opportunistically. It is not a criticism of Election Canada. It's the law that's the problem. It makes no more sense to set separate spending limits for national and local campaigns

than it would between TV commercials and lawn signs. These are matters best left to the parties to work out for themselves.

But then, it doesn't make a whole lot of sense to set overall spending limits, either. The premise is that there should be a level playing field between the parties that should fairness between parties be the guiding principle? The Constitution speaks of the equality of every individual, not the equality of parties. And what are parties but associations of individuals? Surely it is fairness between individuals that should concern us, the equality of each individual citizen to make his voice heard at election time. That, after all, is why we give each of them one vote.

To constrain every party within the same



To constrain every party, regardless of size, within the same spending limit is just silly



spending limit, whether it be 10 members or 10 million, is in fact to put the individuals of which these parties are composed on a distinctly even level footing. In our extreme example, each member of the larger party is permitted precisely one-millionth the "voice" of those in the smaller. Does that imply no limit to the smaller? Not a bit. But the place to impose such limits is not on the parties, but on individuals, not on spending, but on contributions.

Of course, we have contributed to the Tories. The Tories represent business unions and (now) corporate donations at the federal level, and we limit on individual contributions for the first time. These were required further under the Conservatives' Avenir Act. But even corporate loopholes remain. And indeed, even contribution limits, in traditional form, don't get it quite right.

Set a limit on how much an individual can

contribute to a particular candidate or party, after all, and you simply invite the establishment of parallel groups to receive donations, like the "political action committees" familiar from American politics. A similar problem belabors spending limits: what do you do with so-called "third party" advocacy groups, who may or may not be affiliated with the political parties? Either you end up with a total free-for-all, or you impose draconian controls on what private groups can spend to advance their causes, at great harm to freedom of speech.

The answer? Go back to the principle we established earlier: fairness between individuals—the ability of each to contribute to the national conversation at election time, in the one fairness. If every individual had the same income, this would cease to be a concern. The nearest approximation is to set an annual ceiling on the amount individuals can contribute, not just to a particular party or a candidate, but to all of them—the sum total of all

of his political donations in that year. But how he chose to divide them up within this limit, whether between parties, candidates, or party groups, would be up to him.

The beauty of this idea is it's self-limiting: the more you contribute to one party, the less you have left to give to another. Spending limits would likewise be unnecessary. Since only individuals could contribute, and since no individual would have any greater capacity to contribute than any other, the only limit the parties would face would be their ability to raise funds in this manner. And no party's third-party groups would be under the same constraint, so far as they spent money to support or oppose a particular candidate or party.

At a stroke, parties would have been adrift—between individuals, and between the different avenues through which each might seek to express his views in the political arena. Yet at minimal cost to the speech, and without requiring Elections Canada to devise how many local candidates can come on the end of a pin. ■

ON THE WEB: For more Andrew Coyne, visit his blog at www.macleans.ca/andrewcoyne

REWARDS OF TRAVEL: THEY KEEP GETTING BETTER

GET THE POINTS: REWARDS ARE LIKE CASH

It's enough to win anyone's heart. And, of course, that's exactly what the airlines, hotel chains, car rental companies and financial institutions have set out to do with their customer loyalty programs.

As a frequent business traveler, everyone wants your business and they're willing to reward you to get you to come back again and again.

Good customers are worth it. So they're learning up to make their rewards points interchangeable between programs and redeemable for just about anything, as well as being eligible for bonus points offers and reaching the stream of rewards.

Now the points you earn can be spent virtually like cash for flights and hotel rooms or, if you prefer, gas, meals, golf courses, tickets to just about any entertainment, and even for one-of-a-kind experiences that you couldn't buy with plain, boring old cash.

It just doesn't make sense to ignore these offers. Your best move is to analyze what's on the table, decide what you want to save up for and reward the winning companies with your faithful patronage.

But the choice isn't always easy. The best card for you will depend on your own travel and purchasing habits, and your preferences when it comes to the rewards. The offers are also constantly evolving. Bonuses, partnerships and new points-earning credit cards with even better points-earning deals make the perfect program a moving target.

To help you keep your eye on it, here's a rundown of what's new in travel rewards and the trends they represent.

AEROPOLAR VERSATILITY

You can now earn Aeroplan miles through dozens of different partners, including 30 airlines but also through hotels, vacation packages, car rental companies, retailers and insurance companies. But best of all, you can also earn them with affiliated credit cards that will let you to earn miles on pretty much anything you buy.

Miles expire after seven years, which should be adequate time to use them. The company says that, on average, points are used within two and-a-half years of being earned.

You earn miles at the rate of one per Canadian dollar spent, but bonus offers and double-earning with your points-earning credit card can allow you to pile them up more quickly. To give you an idea of points' buying power, you can redeem for flights starting at 15,000 miles, and a currency costs 25,000 points for a round trip from Ontario to B.C. in economy class.

There are no blackout periods and no limits on seats. Your points are like cash.

Keep your eyes open for bonuses. For example, you can earn 1,000 bonus Aeroplan miles on a maximum two-night stay at Fairmont Hotels and resorts until Sept. 3. That's in addition to the 500 miles you'll earn for each eligible stay.



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RBC Royal Bank

There are currently a variety of other hotel promotions with East Western, Novotel, Hilton, La Meridien, Sheraton, Shangri-La and others, plus promotions for car rentals, financial services, retailers such as Ponto.com and product manufacturers such as Bose, Pepsi, Pampers and Rogers. Check the Aeroplan website frequently.

ARTICLES: FLY OR BUY

Here's another iconic rewards program that started with airfare rewards but grew into a whatever you like smorgasbord of 900 rewards categories, including gift cards for everything from fuel to fashion, entertainment including sports, cinema and sightseeing, and all manner of other perks and necessities.

One sometimes overlooked category is business rewards. You register your small business and get a collector card or just register an account with the suppliers and businesses listed on the Amiles website's business sponsors listing. You then collect points on food service purchases, various electrical and security contractors, automotive parts and recruitment agencies and services.

For business owners and managers, it's another quick way to accelerate points earnings. Another way that anyone can use to crash in it is to make your points more valuable by achieving Amex's Gold collector status. You do it by collecting 1,000 points from five sponsors in the calendar year, giving you discounts on selected flights, package tours, merchandise and paid companion tickets on Air Canada and Northwest Airlines.

As for the all-important flight redemptions, they start at 850 Armées. All flights require seven days advance booking and you may need to take a round trip with a Saturday stayover to be eligible. Toronto-Vancouver costs 2,850 points in low season (January, February and fall) and 3,850 in high season (March, summer and Christmas). Calgary-Montreal costs 2,800 Armées in low season and 3,800 in high season. You can buy additional points at 50 cents each if you're short.

Airlines' leasing partners include WestJet, Air Canada, Northwest Airlines/KLM, American Airlines, Lufthansa and Alitalia, among others.

THE CANADA TRUST: GOING FIRST CLASS

TD Canada Trust announced in March it was upgrading its trusty TD Gold Travel Visa to a new TD First Class Travel Visa Infinite card. The new card restructures the points equation so members now own – and earn – three times as many points, but with one-third the value. It's sort of like a three-for-one stock split.

At the same time, TD now allows you to redeem points at 10,000-point

increments of \$50 value instead of 5,000-point increments of \$75 with the old card Plus, you can now redeem for the whole menu of travel expenses – airfare, hotel, rooms, cruises, car rentals, train fares and so on – through any travel agency or website, not just the TD Visa Travel Rewards Centre. You just book it, pay for it on your card – and notify the rewards centre within 90 days to pay for all or part of the purchase with points.

But then you get a whole lot more: automatic trip cancellation insurance up to \$1,000 per person, \$5,000 per person in trip interruption insurance up to \$25,000, and automatic travel medical coverage anywhere in the world for up to eight days if you're under 85 (two days if you're older).

The fee mirrors the sum, making it a traveler's convenience.

RBC: CHOICE FOR TRAVELLERS

The RBC Platinum Avion card is a sweet deal for someone who travels a lot. For \$120 a year, you get 12,500 points upon enrollment and you earn a point for every dollar spent. You get another 2,500 points on your first annual renewal.

You can start redeeming at 15,000 points – the same as for Aeroplan, but the points can be renewed on any airline with no blackout periods and no reward-seat number restrictions on any given flight. You book travel – flights, hotel or car rental – through the PNC Rewards Travel Redemption Centre.

There's a maximum ticket price for each destination stated in the redemption schedule. If the base ticket cost exceeds that price, you have to make up the difference either by charging it on the Avion card or using points at a rate of 100 to the dollar.

If you don't want to redeem points for travel, you have lots of other choices. You can choose from merchandise or for Expo Extra points and get free gas or car washes.

And here's a neat option – you can exchange points for FBC investments and financial services such as paying down your mortgage, credit line or personal loan, or toward an RESP[®] or RESP[®] with a minimum redemption of 12,000 points for a \$100 credit.

But if you don't want to pay for a points earning card, RBC also offers the RBC Rewards Visa Gold card. There's no fee but you still get one point for every \$2 spent and you can redeem points for the same mix of travel and merchandise as the Avion card.

CIBC: INFINITE AND BEYOND

CIBC announced in March that it was launching a new addition to its line of popular Aerogold credit cards – the CIBC Aerogold Visa Infinite card.



While details are still sketchy, the Aerogold Visa Infinite appears to present a great deal. For the same \$120 fee as the Aerogold, the card will offer additional purchasing power, which may allow cardholders to exceed their credit limit as long as the excess amount is paid down by the end of the month.

The new card also offers travel medical insurance and trip interruption insurance, but not trip cancellation insurance. It does, however, come with Aerogold's Message Multiplier feature that gives you 50% more points—that is, 1.5 points per dollar spent up to \$80,000—in grocery stores, gas stations or drug stores, according to the retailer's Visa classification.

Every day, 2,000 Aerogold cardholders fly with Aeroplan miles, making it the most popular travel-reward credit card.



program should give you—especially flexibility.

Redemption rules are generous: No blackout dates, points never expire and, of course, you can spend them on the high end hotels or the less costly ones.

You earn at the usual 10 points per U.S. dollar equivalent spent (2,000 points per stay at InterContinental hotels) and redemptions start at 10,000 to 25,000 for Holiday Inn and run up to the 30,000 to 40,000 range for InterContinental.

Perhaps the most surprising point of flexibility is that you don't even need to redeem points for stays at an IHG hotel. The Any Hotel, Anywhere program lets you use your Priority Club points to buy American Express pre-paid lodging cards that you can use at any hotel that accepts American Express. So if you need to visit a customer in a town without an IHG hotel, you can still use your Priority Club points. Just note that the pre-paid cards expire in one year, so try to buy them only when you need them.

Again, watch for specials. Until April 30, you get 4,000 bonus points, 1,000 bonus miles or 100 bonus Air miles reward miles on every second stay.



PRIORITY CLUB: THE WHY YOU LIKE IT

Priority Club lets you earn or spend the points at all of the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) brands: InterContinental, Crowne Plaza, Hotel Indigo, Holiday Inn, Holiday Inn Express, Staybridge Suites and Candlewood Suites. As a result, you get everything a hotel loyalty

TRAVELLERS' PLASTIC: WHO HOLDS THE BEST CARDS?

Pinpoint the card's offer to matching deals to get you to use their plastic. Which program is right for you depends on how you travel, where, how often, and for how long. Here are a few tips to help you make your choice, and to make the most of it once it's your card.

WHICH CARD TO CHOOSE?

- Watch the annual fees on these cards. The more points they offer, the higher the fees. Make sure you spend enough each year to earn enough points to be worthwhile.
- Check whether points expire. In some loyalty programs points expire after a year or some other period. If you travel frequently and use your points as soon as you have earned enough to redeem, it may not matter. But if you like to save for years for that one big getaway, you could be in for a disappointment. Again, look back over your spending history and figure out whether you will earn enough points to buy the reward you want before they expire.
- If you can't travel whenever you wish, you may want to top up your points and go when you are able. Check the program's rules on sharing or pooling reward points, giving points as gifts or buying additional points.

MAKING THE MOST OF IT

- Once you choose your point-earning card, use it for everything that you normally buy: gas, food, clothing, fees—everything. Don't spend your spending amount on different cards, because you will dilute your earnings. As you accumulate big totals, you usually become eligible for better rewards.
- Double-clip when you can, earning points from retailers and for using the credit card.
- Don't fall into the trap of buying stuff just for the sake of the points, and don't buy more than you can pay off at month's end. Otherwise, your points become extremely expensive—more expensive than just buying the reward.

The last bit of advice is to keep track of your chosen program's rules. They may change, but even more importantly, the best plans are often improving their offers and broadening the ways you can earn points and redeem for rewards.

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Located half way between Sudbury and Sault Ste. Marie, the City of Elliot Lake is nestled among the ancient hills of the pre-Cambrian shield. Surrounded by more than 4,000 pristine lakes and rivers, majestic old growth forests and dramatic rock escarpments, Elliot Lake has long been a popular spot for outdoor enthusiasts seeking adventure. It is now a community of 12,000 with one of the most modern fully serviced infrastructures of any community its size in Canada. Best of all, Elliot Lake remains affordable despite being one of the hottest real estate markets in the country.

ELLIOT LAKE
retirement living

Elliot Lake Retirement Living



Elliot Lake's small-town charm and big-city amenities are a big part of what attracts some retirees. Others come for the unspoiled natural environment surrounding Elliot Lake and the abundance of lakes and rivers. Whatever first attracts them, everyone can appreciate the presence of a first-class hospital, state-of-the-art medical facilities, access to a continuum of care and a low crime rate. Elliot Lake is also equipped with a transit system, a modern water treatment facility, 24-hour ambulance, fire and police services.

Elliot Lake's 400 businesses can also meet most shopping and service needs. Many of the national chains are located in Elliot Lake along with a 180,000-sq.-ft. indoor shopping mall that houses more than 40 stores and services. For those who like to dine out, Elliot Lake offers options ranging from fast-food chains to casual dining or an elegant formal meal at a variety of independent restaurants in the city.

Perhaps because Elliot Lake and its surrounding wilderness are much-loved subjects for canvases and photographers, the city has come to harbour a dynamic arts and cultural community. Numerous clubs offer places for people of all ages to partake in drama, dance, music, pottery and amateur theatre. An abundance of community groups and associations, learning and educational opportunities also contribute to a well-balanced retirement experience.

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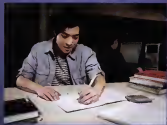


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ANDREW POTTER

The ideaboy of King Charles I. The marmoset of the Seattle. The Clinton Tea Party. Asexuationalist monogamy, the presentation of a fiscal report from a bank and the talking of a provincial budget are not the sorts of things to set men's hearts aflame. But *April 30, 2008*, might yet go down as the day when the citizens of Ontario were confronted with a sedable-burled insult that turned the national order of things topsy-turvy enough to spark a minor revolution.

First came a report from the TID bank that projected that Ontario was well on its way to "break-even" status, and would be able to collect \$400 million in equalization money in the 2000-2001 fiscal year, and as much as \$1.3 billion a year later. Meanwhile, the government of Newfoundland and Labrador was asking a budget that projected a sizable surplus and put the former welfare case of Confederation within a state's throw of becoming a "have" province.

After decades of mindlessly paying the freight for the rest of the country, Ontarians have finally woken up to the fact that Canada's equalization program is *federalism's* version of the Toronto Maple Leafs: every one knows it exists, but the people in charge don't seem to have the slightest notion of how to fix it.

Apart from hockey and a scholastic obsession with winning causing gear at street level, Canadians have two truly bled-nationally-bleeds. From the Canadian Pacific Railway to pretty much everything Pierre Trudeau ever did, the appeal of many supported causes of Canadian unity starts to wear off pretty fast once you pass Lake of the Woods. Our Egalitarianism was supposed to be different. Unlike both the railway and the National Energy Policy, which were discussed as nation building moves, egalitarianism

was supposed to be a truly linguistic expression of national goodwill and solidarity.

But in a fashion that is refreshingly Canadian, that which is supposed to bind us together only drives us farther apart. The whole basis of equalization is that the country is divided into "haves" and "have-nots," a distinction almost scientifically designed to inspire resentment. Why else would Ron McGourty's squawking, so loudly rebuffed here by Danny Williams, be rampant?

The formula for calibrating aquifer storage payments has endured a lot of tinkering over the years, and when Paul Martin's efforts finally brought the whole Rabe Goldbery conspiracy to its knees, both the federal government and the Council of the Interior

happens when you start trying to amend
the Constitution.

But here's the thing: the main political obstacle to getting rid of equalization is not intransigence by Quebec, but lack of leadership in Ontario, combined with widespread public ignorance of how much the current system is harming the province. As for the Constitution, a growing chorus of legal scholars in this country is convinced that not only does the Constitution not require any particular level of transfers, the current system itself is in fact be unconstitutional.

A prominent voice here is David Mackinnon, a long-time Ontario public servant who now devotes a lot of his free time arguing that equalization does economic harm to both the

"these" provinces and the provinces that receive transfer payments, and moreover will ultimately tear the country apart.

In a recent speech to the Empire Club of Toronto, Mackenzie argued that for decades, Ontario's leaders have simply gone along with whatever transfer scheme was cooked up by the feds and the other provinces without giving the slightest thought to the consequences for the economic engine of the country.

Enough. Things must change. Denario needs a



From class sizes to hospital beds, Ontario has the fewest resources per capita in Canada

nation commissioned expert panel reports in 1997, however fit the formula once and for all. But they were well-meaning documents written by well-meaning citizens, but they were doomed to fail for the simple reason that they did not question the very premise of their inquiry: should Canada's system of regional subunits and transfer even exist?

For decades, the only people who lived even more the equalization question were westerners and swing states from our West. In the rest of the country the received wisdom was that ending population was not on the table, for the actual pay of millions. Quebec and the Constitution. Since Quebec gets the lion's share of equalization money (accounted by billion per year), the assumption is that any attempt to eliminate the transfer would speak a fresh upshot is separate territories. And even if Quebec could be persuaded to slash benefits into acquiescing to a political, equalization payments are guaranteed by the Constitution. And we all know what

program of public education to explain how much Ontario is suffering under the current regime. As Mackenzie points out, by just about every measure—from class sizes to hospital beds to the number of judges—Ontario has the fewest resources devoted per capita to public services of any province in Canada. And it needs to challenge the legal underpinnings of the whole system of interprovincial transfers, either through an independent study or in court.

All of this will take leadership, a sureness that it is its personally short supply in Ontario. But the spark of revolution is often identifiable in hindsight, and April 19 might go down as the day that the province finally awoke to the fact that while equality may never be extended as a hand-up and not a handout, the end result is that everyone gets pulled down to the road. ■

ON THE WEB: For more, Andrew Pollitt tells his horse all www.equinus.com.au/andrewpollitt

How B.C. became a world crime super-power

Forget forestry or fishing. B.C.'s big, multi-billion-dollar growth industry is crime. And business is booming.

BY JASON KIRBY AND NANCY MACDONALD

By almost any measure, Vancouver is thriving, with its suburbs in eight counties and adjoining distribution houses. Even more impressive, it was not one of Vancouver, a city that's seen many head offices disappear over the years. And with its strong sales, the venture would easily have been considered one of British Columbia's biggest private companies. "That is, if the operation at the heart of it is all water-to-crime syndicate trading in marijuana, cocaine, heroin, guns and real estate."

In December, officers from the RCMP and Vancouver Police Department showed off the results of a six-month investigation called Project Ice-Peakon. Working with police in the U.S. and Australia, officers seized 1668 million worth of drugs, along with luxury homes, exotic vehicles, oil rigs in Cuba and weapons. More than 100 people were arrested

worldwide, including the alleged ringleader, 50-year-old Yang Long-Yu of Vancouver. The allegations regarding the crime ring have not been proven in court, but police believe they've broken up an incredibly complex and profitable operation. And if Canadians are inclined to believe this was a one-off scheme, an observation on the postcard-perfect fringe British Columbia projects to the world, think again. "There are lots more, we don't have a shortage of targets," says RCMP Sgt. Doug Ridd, of the combined special forces enforcement unit in Vancouver.

Consider, for a moment, just a few figures that show the size and scope of the crime industry in B.C.:

- There are an estimated 20,000 opium farms growing opium across the province, and many thousands more hidden in the mountains and valleys of the interior. It's con-



servatively estimated that marijuana is an industry with revenues of \$5 billion to \$7 billion a year.

- In the last few years, according to the Canadian Border Services Agency, more than \$1 billion worth of cocaine has been seized at borders in the Pacific region. One media report last fall found the amount of cocaine recovered at B.C. borders more than tripled in the previous two years.

- "The province is the main port of entry for chemicals used in the manufacture of drugs such as methamphetamine and cocaine, while B.C.-based Asian gangs are the largest suppliers of ecstasy to Canada and the U.S."

- In the last year there have been roughly two dozen gangland slayings in the Vancouver police zone. The number of homicides in B.C.'s Lower Mainland in the first four months of this year was nearly three times that of Toronto. And when Macdonald recently looked at Canada's most dangerous cities using data from Statistics Canada, 11 of the top 20 were located in B.C. Meanwhile, the number of gangs operating in the province has jumped from less than 10 a decade ago to 120.

Add it all up, and you can't help but see British Columbia for what it is—a key hub in the world of international organized crime. It's all in natural beauty and its blockbuster reputation, police now put Vancouver on par with New York and Los Angeles when they talk of cities in the grip of criminal syndicates. By some estimates, criminal activity accounts to



THE ALLEGED RINGLEADER in a global bust, Vancouver's Yang Long-Yu, can't shift, like property crimes of all sorts, is a serious problem

Don't put Vancouver on par with places like New York and L.A. when it comes to criminal syndicates



roughly seven per cent of the province's total economy. Though hard on the members about the state of organized crime are impossible to determine, it's safe to say that alongside construction and tourism, organized activity is one of B.C.'s strongest growth industries. "We can quibble about a billion dollars here or a billion dollars there," says Dorell Pines, a criminology professor at the University College of the Fraser Valley. "But the bottom line is there's no question that a multi-billion dollar industry." And in Western Canada, perhaps south to be North America's most important commercial corridor to Asia, with the newly headed Pacific Gateway initiative, criminal gangs are poised to expand their operations in a huge way. Crime in big business in B.C., and business, unfortunately, is booming.

If anyone does lead British Columbia in the crown jewel in a battle between ruthless gangs, the mounting body count in recent months has surely shocked them into realization. The tally linked into two high-profile falls with the grisly "Surrey Slayings." Six men were murdered in the pasthouse state of a high-rise condo suspected of doubling as a drug den. Two were innocent women, the fourth others were young Indo-Canadian men linked to cocaine trafficking. Two weeks later, a gangland hit of the Big Circle Boys—a ruthless gang with roots in Kelowna, B.C.—was shot dead outside his parking lot, gang members in Vancouver's upscale Shaughnessy neighbourhood. His own 10-year-old daughter died 901. The two young men were pinned down on

one of Vancouver's main thoroughfares when two black SUVs barreled in when silver Mercedes and sprayed it with bullets.

According to police, 40 per cent of all murders in the Lower Mainland are now tied to organized crime. For Vancouver's law-abiding citizens, the increasingly brazen public executions near schools and in public neighbourhoods having little respect for workers. When a roadside spin barn was a restaurant as the city's quiet one late last summer, guns blazing, they killed two people and left a scene right out of Al Capone era Chicago, down lying in pools of blood and upturned tables and spent shell casings.

But the courage on the streets is only the most obvious sign organized crime has infiltrated everyday life. In December, the B.C. Program Board reported that, in 2006, Vancouver had the second highest combined violent and property crime rate of all major cities in Canada and the U.S. For instance, it had nearly 3.6 times as many break-ins and entries as New York City, when measured per 100,000 people. Meanwhile, also the first to receive a serious problem since the success of a bus car program, in which cars are outfitted with interior cameras and GPS and parked in high

locations. Many a Honda Civic here been whisked away, only to show up on the streets of Dubai and eastern Europe.

Things get far murkier once you start to examine the Surrey here in B.C.'s criminal and legitimate economies. One center in Vancouver told the National Post a few years ago that a quarter of its business involved selling luxury cars for cash to those involved in the drug trade. That helps explain the absurd number of Mercedes, Mercedes and Hummers that roam the streets. It's estimated that more people are employed in the mini-gang industry than in traditional sectors like forestry. It is a wonder the trade in illicit goods doesn't show up in the economic statistics. B.C. is the only province to have passed a seizure, and failing, personal saving con-

ve emerged as a leading centre for credit card fraud after police raided what was dubbed a "credit card factory" three years ago. The U.S. Secret Service has reportedly deemed the credit cards produced by the Asian centres syndicates to having the most realistic graphics it has ever seen in North America. The group was able to extract data from corrupt merchants, gas station attendants and restaurant staff in the Vancouver area. One well-known credit-card fraudster in his opinion is a "can operator" work. Such centres were unheard of in Vancouver a decade ago, but police say counterfeiter schemes are on the rise as gangs realize the potential for profits are significantly higher than with marijuana.

Gangs have also found a thriving business in the illegal transport of people through B.C.

police has declined over the last three years, though at the same time police say the average size of grow ops has increased thanks to technological innovations that boost the yield of each plant.

What is certain is that groups like the Vancouver gangs, who cut their teeth on the business, are finding tremendous success overseas. Hundreds of "cannabis farms" have sprung up in the U.S., and authorities have a good idea where the industry originated. "We believe this is a problem that started in Canada," Crime Allen Gibson with the U.S. Assistant Attorney General told a 1996 documentary crew. "Vancouver gangs" made a name for themselves in being able to earn large amounts of money by setting up cannabis factories. Like entrepreneurs

their job. "Don't kid yourself, old folks, kids 16 and up, everyone's involved in some way or another," says Leah (not her real name), a struggle. A Vancouver resident in her mid-20s who for two years has worked the harvest. In these parts, no one asks what anyone does for a living. "It's not unusual, you talk a hour the weather and so." One nearby hydroponic store enjoys annual sales of \$6.5 million while heavy equipment operators admit to selling quarter-million dollar excavators—for cash. Indeed, B.C. towns like Nelson have come to assemble the remote hillside villages of Bolivia or Columbia, where entire populations are involved in some leaf production. The business typically is that when authorities crack down on grow ops, it can hurt some small-town economies. Robert Smith, a 79-

If marijuana production was factored into province accounts, B.C.'s trade surplus would jump 230%, to \$8.6 billion

HEAVY GROW OPS ARE MOSTLY A THING OF THE PAST; THE AVERAGE GROWER REPORTED 10 COPS FROM 1997 TO 2003 HAD SEVEN PRIOR CONVICTIONS.

According to a crime threat assessment conducted by the RCMP and FBI three years ago, human trafficking and money laundering are the third largest sources of worldwide revenue for organized criminals after drugs and arms dealing. Vancouver's location makes it an ideal transit point for the money trade, and in recent years police have uncovered several trafficking pipelines operating through the city. In November, the Forum Group, a Calgary organization that seeks to prevent human trafficking, warned gangs may migrate to women to work as prostitutes during the 2010 Olympics. "Vancouver is considered to be a hub for Pacific human trafficking," Benjamin Penta, a professor at UBC's Faculty of Law, told a Vancouver newspaper. "Any time you have an influx of foreign tourism and money, you have a huge threat for the sex trade."

de, they started an opening and moved in." Britain isn't alone in dealing with B.C.'s more enterprising criminals. In California, accounts of indoor grow ops jumped 260 per cent between 2004, 2006, says Robert Taylor, a Sacramento-based agent with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. "It was new phenomenon we hadn't seen before. It blew in like a tornado." The DEA knew precisely where growers had found their model. "It was as though they'd taken a page out of the B.C. bad handbook," he says. In a December drug situation report, the RCMP referred to this shift to the south as the "displacement... of technical expertise and knowledge" because Canadians would recognize it by its more familiar label: human drugs.

What Britain and the U.S. want to avoid is having marijuana to take root in an integral part of their economies, as it has in B.C. To understand the cash crop's rise in the province, an ideal place to start is Nelson. Located roughly 650 km inland from Vancouver, the haven for Dutchies, draft dodgers and free spirit stores has big marijuana products. What started as a cottage industry in the 1960s became a foundation of the local economy, as mills gradually closed and hundreds lost

year-old families rose twice in that time. Grand Forks, almost twice the size in that last year, police shut down several large grow ops. "Because of that, there's more people on the move," he says. "With the [factory] job cuts and the cheapdown on marijuana growers, we're a lot short of jobs."

Last year, the RCMP detachment in tiny Clearwater, a forestry town of 5,000 north of Kamloops, recovered \$25 million worth of marijuana, along with cocaine, \$1.2 million in cash and a cache of guns, providing a hint of how much drug money winds through the interior. "There are a lot of people in B.C. who see this as a way to earn a decent middle-class income," says Misha Gieny, author of *Middling: A Journey Through the Global Criminal Underworld*. His book included a chapter on B.C.'s criminal syndicates, which he considers a great deal of action on British Columbia's lush. "That makes life for law enforcement extremely difficult."

Indeed, sleepy backwaters like these are ideal for outdoor marijuana production. For one, they're surrounded by thousands of acres of hidden dirt-road accessible via a system of often well-kept roads. The location is also an important export point, a mercer-



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NATIONAL

customers officers patrol a several-hundred-kilometre-long stretch of open border. So a small army of ordinary folks are now producing marijuana and a cottage of drug lords are shipping it, helped by port supervisors and dispersing global trade.

To Leah, working the marijuana crop is just another summer job, like tree-planting, though the earnings, ranging from 3,000 to 15,000 for the four-week summer harvest, are admittedly higher. Those processing the dried crop can earn more than \$600 a day, especially if they're stable-fingered. Even in Vancouver many of these selling marijuana at the street level have to fill time by granting access to an always available class of life-size lawn, a two-way-swinging dealer, has been selling marijuana for seven years now, says

several large levels of B.C. had into the U.S. Then there was the troubling case of Brian Doris Kaur Puar. In 2005, the 30-year-old lab technician and mother taught a spot on Vancouver city council. Her political aspirations crashed to the ground when she was caught as the U.S. selling thousands of ecstasy pills (she told an undercover de-ag agent). Indo-Canadian gangs aren't to be missed with "That's what the game is like in Vancouver: you f--- with us, you die." The episode must have been working higher officer, though nothing came of it. "There's been an indication Canadian police have been compromised so that politicians or judges have been bought, but it's hard to imagine these kinds of forms of money without that happening," says Stephen Leeson, an economist pro-

In the course of the B-Panagon investigation, Canadian police required more than 200 police officers nationwide for wiretaps and warrants, while police in Australia and the U.S. needed just 12 agents. And when the B-Panagon case finally goes to trial, it will surely be a huge-ended lasting moment. "It's a second co-kill, several aspects across in Australia as part of the same investigation are already serving their sentences." Canada isn't heading to be that international because that once was because our law enforcement kept up with the realities of the world," he says.

Some believe the police are making more money efforts. These are either a single provincial force to replace the 116 RCMP divisions currently serving B.C., while pressure is mounting for the lower than-leads 11 police departments to merge into one. Still, more than half of all respondents told an Angus Reid poll last November police are currently incapable of dealing with organized crime. Premier Campbell says the province has added 950 additional officers over the last two years. "You always wish you could do more, but the fact is, it takes a while to train police officers," he says.

In the meantime that's left the task of fighting crime is unlikely to be as easy as Len Galt, Surrey's first chief. In 2005 as many as 8.5 per cent of all firms on the only look place in supported grow ops. He pushed for a bylaw allowing firefighters and police to enter suspected grow ops to check electrical wiring. The result is that in 2008 there was just one such firm, while the number of grow ops has fallen drastically. But last last month a Surrey resident, whose house was searched and found no signs of a grow op, filed a lawsuit with the B.C. Supreme Court saying the bylaw is unconstitutional.

So it goes. While the province struggles with how to defend itself against the organized crime onslaught, gangs are finding no shortage of reasons to pursue—track market manipulation, extortion, gasoline theft, the list goes on and on. With each new line of business, crime steps further into the everyday lives of British Columbians. There will surely be more steps taken on the scale of B-Panagon. But it will take more than that to put the gang out of business. In B.C., crime, for the time being at least, does pay. ■

With Ken MacQuinn

Even the real estate boom is caught up in criminal schemes. 'You have to look at the prices and ask "who is buying?"'



BUSTED: The amount of cocaine recovered at B.C.'s borders tripled in the past two years.

ing around \$46,000 a year, tax-free. The local market is huge, the says, and the industry is more widespread than anywhere else in the country. "You can make more money here than anywhere else," she says.

A s organized crime flows in waves in the province, many fear the inevitable outcome will be a sophisticated and sustainable. "There have to be people on the side across the open zone," says Robert Gordon, head of the School of Criminology at Simon Fraser University. "From case to case you see little signals." For instance, last October a Canadian guard was arrested at B.C.'s biggest border crossing for allowing people to smuggle cocaine, money and guns into Canada. A month later a corrections officer helped a notorious Peruvian prison boss escape from a maximum-security prison. It was the first time in B.C. history that a prison guard was charged with helping a prisoner escape from jail, the high-ranking gang leader a rival on the term. Then, just last month, a U.S. border services agent posted to the same, busy border crossing north of Surrey, B.C., was sentenced to 37 months in prison for allowing a Vancouver woman to smuggle

air at Simon Fraser University. This all makes sense, he says, but it's not the growth of crime that much more troubling. Police and prosecutors have found multiple networks at the hands of the courts recently. Few of those arrested by police for growing marijuana actually serve prison sentences. Meanwhile, the biggest blow came in March when prosecutors lost a case that would have seen the Hells Angels declared a "criminal organization." Police spent two years and \$10 million trying to prove that David Galt, a member of the Hells Angels East End chapter, and two co-defendants had been involved in trafficking cocaine. B.C. Supreme Court Justice Anne MacKinnon acquitted Galt, saying the evidence against him was "weak." At the same time police say crime figures are hoppers that previous major crime figures



WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE: WILLIAMS RUBS IT IN
"It's just a wonderful source of humour." Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty is responsive to Newfoundland Premier Desley Williams, who commented earlier on the may that Newfoundland will become a "heavily" province just as Ontario becomes a "heavily not." "We're here to help of a strong relationship," said Williams, "and we're here to help our member states in their time of need."

SURPLUS ANXIETY

Canada's economy could safely handle a temporary return to deficits, but could the Tories survive it?

BY JOHN GEDDES

Nothing in recent memory changed federal politics more than the vanishing of deficits a decade ago. The age of credit-billion-dollar surpluses, anchored by Jean Chrétien's Liberals, gave Canadian politicians new options at home and bragging rights abroad. Canada emerged from fiscal basket case to bask in balanced books. Given how central that issue has become to selling Canada, you'd think the prospect of a return to red ink would prompt shock. Yet as a sleeping economy makes a deficit look possible again, the experts are surprisingly blasé. "I mean, deficits," shrugs Jeff Ralston, chief economist at CIBC World Markets, "I don't see this as the great calamity some economists do." Actually, it's hard to find one who sees it that way. "If Canada slipped into a deficit," says Douglas Porter, BMO Capital Markets' deputy chief economist, "it would be much more a political issue than an economic one."

Most analysts agree Canada's economic fundamentals—strong public debt, low unemployment, sound inflation—are so solid that a small, temporary deficit isn't likely to reflect much real danger. The political fundamentals, however, are far less stable, with the Conservatives and Liberals running neck and neck in most polls. One clear advantage Prime Minister Stephen Harper enjoys over Liberal Leader Stéphane Dion is his image on economic matters. Angus Reid's latest opinion poll found that Harper was judged a good economic manager by 62 per cent of respondents, way ahead of Dion's 35 per cent. And history suggests that edge matters just before the 1988 election. The ultimate winner in what turned out to be an epic campaign, was judged best economic manager by 54 per cent, far ahead of Liberal challenger Jean Turner's 29 per cent.

Preaching a clip back into deficit could hurt Harper of his traditional Tory brand advantage. So he has to be hoping the Can-

adian economy weathers the current U.S. downturn well enough that Ottawa's balance sheet doesn't take a beating. The numbers suggest it will be a close call either way. In his February budget, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty predicted a \$10 to \$15 billion surplus for the 2008-09 fiscal year, based on a planning assumption that Can-

ada's gross domestic product would grow a mere 1.7 per cent this year. But even that modest hope now looks optimistic. The Bank of Canada recently revisited its own forecast for GDP growth down to 1.4 per cent, and some private economists are even plumper. TD Bank Financial Group's economists project 1.1 per cent growth, while the University of Toronto's Rotman School of Management forecasts expect an anemic 0.8 per cent.

Those tepid projections matter because for every one per cent reduction in GDP growth, the federal government expects to lose \$2.5 billion in revenues—enough to wipe out Flaherty's surplus. There are other variables, of course, like



There's a lot of strength in the Canadian economy!
—Mark Carney

what interest rate Ottawa pays on its debt and how much the government pays out in employment insurance benefits. So making precise predictions is impossible. As well, many economists suspect Flaherty's officials have hidden more

extracurricular in their calculations. After all, in recent years the Finance Department has routinely poured surplus dollars into the Treasury rather than planned. "There are all sorts of layers of prudence built into the

budget numbers," says BMO's Porter. Flaherty is certainly talking as if he can tolerate he won't be suffering any fiscal embarrasement. "Our budget is balanced. It can remain so in any situation," he recently said in a speech in Ontario, Ont., at a party



JIM FLAHERTY (INSET) THE FEDERAL BUDGET WILL BE IN BALANCE

choice of venue, since General Motors plans to shed 570 jobs at its pickup truck plant there. After another speech last month (at another different forum), the Commerce Association of New York at the New York York

Club, Flaherty again vowed not to go into deficit, explaining that, if need be, "we also can always do what the government needs to think they can't do, which is to restrain spending from one to one." Back in Ottawa, he repeated under the House that he will "restrain spending if that becomes necessary."

That possibility has done little to ring out over at the Canadian Controller Policy

A deficit 'would be a political issue more than an economic issue'
—Doug Porter

Alternatives. The left-leaning centre, which produces an annual "alternative federal budget" that reflexively advocates more social spending, issued a report back in January that was one of the first anywhere to flag the potential for a deficit, as the economy showed signs of weakening. Marc Lac, a senior economist at the centre, worried that the government's incentive system would be to cut spending "rather than reinvest in us."

The tax cuts Lee was referring to here, like those enacted, independently played a big part in making a deficit conceivable again. The two percentage points Flaherty has added all the GST will cost the government

"Tax cuts are all they know, and their legacies are littered with deficits."
—Gerard Kennedy

\$12 billion in 2008-09. (New economists think cutting the value added tax even smarter move.) Personal and corporate income tax reductions brought in by the Tories will shrink federal revenues by more than \$16

billion. Liberals duly charge that the government has intentionally created a fiscal square that will give them an excuse to trim program spending in the name of keeping the books balanced. "In five years, they have destroyed the fiscal framework," Dion said in the House this week. "We do this rather than to they could cut social services."

But if the Conservatives seriously believe deficit fears as a justification for shrinking government, they've done a good job on cutting their dishevelled intentions. Flaherty held spending 6.3 per cent two years ago, and 5.4 per cent last year. His latest budget projects a two per cent increase in this fiscal year and 4.9 per cent next year. Not exactly a picture of limited austerity, but does that track record of expansion



mean the government is spending so heavily that it could afford to pinically scale back on avoid dipping into the red? Economists warn that would be the dumbest policy reaction. "If

you deliberately try to knockout a deficit by cutting spending or raising taxes," says University of Toronto economics professor Peter Duggan, "you make the situation worse." Not only would a fiscal contraction be wound off a deficit once it exactly the wrong reason for a spending increase, it would also undermine the stimulus Flaherty has already injected into the economy. The GST and personal tax cuts he announced last fall rank effect at the start of 2008, just in time to put some cash into the pockets of consumers faced with increasingly discouraging economic news, Duggan says. In fact, it's the second time in recent years that a big Canadian tax relief package has made an appearance at the perfect point in an economic cycle, the sweeping tax cut announced by then finance minister Paul Martin in the fall of 2006 (ended just as the U.S. economy slumped in 2007).

Whether through good luck or great foresight, the Flaherty and Martin tax cuts show how federal action can help offset an economic downturn. Still, going forward Harper and Flaherty might be less preoccupied with fine-tuning the economic impact of their budgetary actions than self-protecting policies. After a decade of good news, the Canadian treasury looks steadily enough to wish that the symbols of a minor deficit. The political forces of a minority Conservative government with an eye on the next election demand more careful spending. ■

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What if she cancelled the hit man?

BY MARTIN PATRICHON • The Supreme Court will decide this week whether it has the power to order a Quebec woman who shot her husband after killing a hit man to kill her husband.

In 2004, Monique Fournier was found guilty of first-degree murder for the 1985 slaying of her husband, Michel Boucher. Fournier, who is now 64, had hired her lover Robert Lagacé to arrange the murder—and, presumably, to kill her if she refused to do the deed. Chénier then shot Boucher in the back of the head while she was in a chair. Fournier was sentenced to life in prison.

FOURNIER has appealed to the Supreme Court to hear her case.

Monique Fournier, though, says she urged Lagacé to leave before, telling him to cancel the hit. For whatever reason, Lagacé didn't, and on Sept. 22, 1985, Boucher pumped six bullets into Mr. Fournier in a church parking lot in Hull. Now, after years behind bars and a failed appeal to the Quebec Court of Appeals, Fournier believes she deserves to be heard by the highest court in the land. Because she tried to call off the hit, "there was proof that she no longer had the intent to kill him," says Alexandre Rouleau, Fournier's lawyer. "In fact, the shooting was against her wishes."

"Mr. Lagacé got a page from my chest cancelling the hit, and he didn't do anything about it," Boucher says. In addition, the case against Fournier relied heavily on testimony from Lagacé, who has been accused of a related sentence. Since then, Boucher says, Lagacé has reversed himself, denying any involvement in the murder, yet extenuating Fournier was involved. "The very fact that he has contradicted himself should say something," Boucher said. At the very least, he says, Fournier should be found guilty of the lesser charge of involuntary manslaughter.

Boucher worries that there will be administrative concerns should the Supreme Court not hear the case. "If the message is that you are guilty no matter what you did to prevent it, this will impede people from reconsidering illegal activity they have planned." ■

We really are richer than we think

BY PETER BROWN TAYLOR • Two reports from Statistics Canada. Two very different views on Canadian income.

On May 1, the census released a major report on Canadian incomes over the past 25 years. The headline number? The median full-time earnings for Canadians rose a mere 4.5% between 1980 and 2005, after inflation. In other words, the typical Canadian worker appears to be making the same today as he or she was 25 decades ago. The Globe and Mail put this grim fact on its front page in a font size typically reserved for divine revelations.

Then four days later StatsCan released a very similar document called *Income in Canada*. This time, however, the top-line figure was that after-tax family income in Canada has risen 2.1 per cent over the past year and is now up by almost 39,000 since 1997. It seems like rather good news. How can both reports be correct?

The answer is to be found in how the vari-



TOTAL FAMILY INCOME has risen sharply, but **workers' earnings** still lag behind those of non-

union workers are contracted. The census is based on lengthy questionnaires sent to one in five Canadians. Income in Canada, by comparison, is derived from a survey of 30,000 representative Canadian families. Despite its smaller sample size it includes far more detail on income earned and taxes paid than does the census.

"The census just looks at employees' earnings while Income in Canada includes all forms of income a Canadian family gets, including government and retirement income and transfers from government," says Nicole Wedhans, director of fiscal stud-

ies at the Fraser Institute in Vancouver. "So it's a better reflection of what is happening in Canada."

And in spite of the widely reported pessimism of the census, the rosier figures from Income in Canada are more consistent with the gossip of life in Canada, says Wedhans. "When most people objectively look at how their lives have changed over time, they will come to the conclusion that they're in a much better place today than they were in 1980," he notes.

The census also sounded an alarm over growing inequality in Canada. Not counting earnings alone, while ignoring government transfers, severely distorts the true income of poor Canadians. Government assistance accounts for more than half the total income among the bottom 50% of the income spectrum.

All this said, there remains a strange disconnect between sluggish individual earnings reported by the census, and the robust growth in family after-tax income from Income in Canada. Wedhans blames the current stagnation on low productivity growth in Canada. Another explanation may be found in the changing demographics of the family.

Driven by steady growth in female employment over past decades, the double-income family has replaced the single-breadwinner family as the dominant model. Less than 20 per cent of all families now follow the two-income model, while the share of families in which two people work full time is up 50 per cent since 1980. With more families relying on two incomes rather than one, it should come as no surprise that total income for families has been rising sharply as well.

However, it is still the case that female earnings lag those of men. The census found women working full time earned 85 cents for every dollar earned by men in 2005. StatsCan did find that in cases of identical education, experience and occupation, men and women earn the same. While the female earnings gap has narrowed since 1980—when the figure was 75 cents—the gender difference will need to disappear if individual incomes are to rise. It is possible to have both flat earnings for individuals and substantial growth in family incomes. Maybe Statistics Canada got it right after all. ■

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YES, A LITTLE TOO SMOOTH? said one female Indiana voter about Obama. "It's like everything is too easy for him—I get leery of that."

CLINTON IS BANKING ON ECONOMIC TROUBLES TO DRAW THE WHITE WORKING-CLASS VOTE



Wright: "There is a slow level of trust; still, the

RACE AND CLASS

The U.S. campaign has come down to two things Americans don't like to discuss

BY LIZHA CH. SAVAGE • "It's a good speechmaker. It's a mother. There's just something I don't like about him." Karen Beagleman is a 69-year-old native who worked 30 years more before in northern Indiana. She's trying to put her finger on why she, like so many white working-class voters, doesn't get the appeal of Barack Obama. Nor does her friend, Karen Lewis, who worked in the same factory for 14 years.

"He doesn't have enough experience. Sorry," says Beagleman.

"He's a little overconfident," says Lewis.

"He's a little too smooth," adds Beagleman.

"It's" says Lewis. "Too smooth, too smooth."

"It's like everything is too easy for him. I get leery of that," adds Beagleman.

They have arrived at these conclusions in a long line in front of the high school in Columbia City, population 2,000, to hear Bill Clinton campaign on behalf of his wife, whom they admire.

"Bill [Clinton] walks into a room and get down and speak with her," confides Beagleman, and spots short curly grey hair, white jacket

and a pink polo shirt with all its buttons done up. She repeats this point several times, and adds that she can't imagine doing the same with Obama.

"We don't come across as arrogant. She's been through a lot and she's come through it. And we're all hard workers," she adds.

"Yes," agrees Lewis. "Yes, we have."

Hillary Rodham Clinton is breaking on crackling-lasagne, hand-cut boules, delectable gas prices and health care bills—address the white working-class vote somehow suit her over Obama's lead among pledged convention delegates. Even as he remains the likely Democratic nominee, her campaign is looking—on a headstart, not both state that has lost its share of manufacturing jobs and in places like around the country, focused like a laser on economic bread-and-butter issues.

The race was crucial to her strong showing on Tuesday as Indiana's primary, and reflects a broader Democratic dilemma that has to do with Obama from seeing up the size. Although Obama heavily took North Carolina Tuesday, with its large black population, preserving his healthy lead in several delegates, out jobs in state after state have shown Clinton winning over the white working class. That's enabled her to argue to the party's undecided superdelegates will outside-debating votes in the race for the nomination that she is the stronger choice against presumptive Repub-

lican nominee John McCain. Her argument gained traction as Obama faced accusations of elitism, not to mention questions about his patriotism, values and judgment: after video footage was aired of his long-draw pause listening the U.S. government for the AIDS virus and thundering "God damn America."

"It's truly business, this class stuff. Americans don't touch like touch about it. Surveys show that most people—rich or poor—tend to describe themselves as 'middle class.' And yet it is class, along with race, that has been shaping this Democratic contest, and laying low deep divisions in American society and among Democrats who are so assumed to be united in their dislike of George W. Bush, Ruth Liebman and her, John McCain

When Bill Clinton arrives at the high school gym and launches into a hand-wringing, policy-heavy speech, it's slow to register that he and his wife have made Obama nearly 10 million times leaving the White House nearly eight years ago. He attacks the Bush administration's tax cuts that were "supposed to have middle-class benefits to the rest of us" but ended up helping the rich. He talks about being the first person in his family to go to college, to his working six jobs as a law-school—only three of them in one time, and "to bring the poorest president ever to move into the White House." My momma didn't

even believe I could be president," he notes. He serves up his wife's policy proposals with a happy-go-lucky that he says he has encountered on the campaign: that the single mother of an 18-year-old son who lost his mother who had no health insurance and died of breast cancer; the father with multiple sclerosis who is being foreclosed on his home; the teacher driven into bankruptcy by high gas prices who was advised to get a divorce to collect more government aid. Seven years after such dogma was him the presidency, it's "I feel your pain" and "It's the economy, stupid!" all over again. "But get this economy and how it affects you," he says of his wife.

Watching Clinton from the bleachers is Liana Cleveland, 47, who drives a blue for-sale dollars on loan. She's a Midland and says she is frustrated that when her husband got a better paying job, she had to pay higher deductibles for her medical coverage. "It's like they don't want us to get ahead," she sighs. She says the plans to vote for Hillary because "I think she's willing to do more for the working class."

The demographic divisions in this race have been deep, but some may surprise. While it is perhaps not surprising that African Americans have flocked to Obama, and women have to some extent favored Clinton, it has been less obvious why Obama has had a harder time with working-class whites.

On paper, Clinton and Obama's policy proposals on issues such as health care and jobs differ very little. On paper, Obama's foreign policy appears similar to Clinton's, if not more daring, a Barack led raised by a single mother and his grandparents, who made it to Columbia University,

and then passed up lucrative job opportunities to work with unemployed workers on Chicago's south side. An ex-Chinese, whose middle-class family sent her to prestigious Wellesley College before she made it through Yale Law School on loans, who has emerged to insist on her world from a successful corporate lawyer and globe-trotting first lady to a short-tenured, overpaid, completely with a strong hand.

How? Part of the answer is Bill. For many voters, the Clintons are tried-and-true. The day after the former president's appearance in Columbia City, Carolyn Polite, a 44-year-old letter carrier with the U.S. Postal Service, travelled 72 km from the northern Indian city of Angola to hear Hillary Clinton speak at the Indiana Institute of Technology in Fort Wayne. She recalled that when her husband was born 20 years ago, he had six weeks off to save for him before going back to work that when her daughter was born six years later, after Bill Clinton had signed into law the Family and Medical Leave Act, one of his first as president, she was able to take double that time. "I was able to be home for my daughter and spend more money time with her," says Polite, who expects her daughter has grown up healthier than her son as a result. "No other president has offered my life like this."

A second reason is Hillary Clinton's deliberate strategy in recent weeks to make her campaign in the voters—win at the risk of appearing to parallel. Ahead of the primaries in Indiana and North Carolina, she endorsed a proposal by McCain to suspend the federal gas tax for the summer. Obama called the idea a giveaway that would save the average family a total of \$362.50, assuming the oil com-

panies don't pocket the difference, and warned that it would blind a hard-earned tax to highway upkeep, leading to the loss of thousands of construction jobs. Clinton dismissed Obama's criticism as "class opinion." She sounded neither Bush-like in praising congressional Democrats nor did she admit "they are what we are." Inevitably, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi denounced the idea. "None of us, there is no reason to believe that any investment on the gas tax will be passed on to the consumer," Pelosi told reporters. When Clinton was asked about a single economist who agreed with the gas tax plan, she told ABC's The View's George Stephanopoulos on Sunday, "I'm not going to put my foot in with someone."

When Clinton arrives in Fort Wayne, she is introduced by the state's popular senator, Evan Bayh, whose long record as a potential vice-presidential running mate for either candidate. "If you stand with us," he'll stand with us because that's our life," says Clinton quickly gets right down to the bread and butter jobs, on credits for college and retirement, a measurement on foundations, and universal health care. The key message now dropping the gas on her opponents, as she talks about "bills to try to break between gas and groceries." The crowd erupts in enthusiasm. At one point, Clinton tells a story about getting a bill to a campaign event in South America in pickup truck. Flipping up half a truck of gas cost \$186.00, she says to a woman, "Seventeen dollars for the wilderness," "Ninety-five dollars!" Another: "That hundred and two dollars!" Clinton is losing it. "What else?" she calls out. The crowd cheers. "The question is, who understands what you are going through and who can you trust to be on your side?" What is the economy

PHOTOS BY JEFFREY M. HARRIS FOR TIME

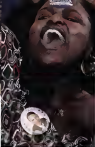
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MACLEAN'S MAY 19 2008

33



'WHEN WE CALL TO ASK FOR VOTES, PEOPLE SAY THEY WOULD NEVER VOTE FOR A BLACK MAN'



IN INDIANA, one Republican who booed Obama's speech said he was still troubled by the Wright issue. "They were too close for too long."

needs, she declares, is a president "who is going to be a fighter in your behalf."

When she finishes, Clinton is thronged by admirers who want her autograph. But across the street from the event hangs a reminder that this remains an overwhelmingly Republican state, and a foretaste of what the general election might hold for a Clinton candidacy. A blue poster, emblematic of the Clinton image, has been hung in the yard under a sign, "Liar, liar, Hillary's pants on fire, there was no super fix," in reference to her exaggerated tale of arriving in war-torn Bosnia. Another sign evokes a different black garment. "The Clintons left a stain on our visibility. No more stains. Vote McCain."

Elsewhere in Indiana, Obama struggles to promote his regular pay, not some exotic relic who frequents sexy posessions and won't wear an American flag on his lapel. The Illinois senator shows up at the Dairy Club building, a fairgrounds in the city of South Bend, clad in a white shirt, charcoal slacks and a silver blue tie, looking more Chatterbox than Bad Light. He reads in the middle of the low-dunged field, surrounded by fields of hay and an antique Ford tractor. To an audience of mostly white farmers, he takes pains to emphasize his maternal grand parents' roots in rural Kansas. His paternal grandfather and her children back in Kenya are also read.

By 11:30 a.m., a 52-year-old bus driver from Tipton County, happened upon the Obama visit while attending a Strawberry or cherry dinner and snap most cheese on the fairgrounds. She is a Republican who is considering voting Democrat this year—for whoever will take on the immigration issue. Her brother works at an auto plant that is

scheduled to close. "We have someone given us an order who bring in immigrant workers, when we have so many people unemployed," she adds.

A born-again Christian, Middleton says she prefers Obama to Clinton, whom she dislikes, but she was stopped cold by the Rev. Jeremiah Wright again, during which Obama at first defended his pastor of more than 20 years, then eventually denounced him after Wright made several incendiary public appearances. "If he believes him, he should stick up for him. If he doesn't, he should have disowned himself a long time ago," she says.

The husband of a top police officer at an Indiana university once said, within arms' reach of the senator, who doesn't have a grey hair (she has his closely cropped hair), but is an act of fatigue about him that was missing earlier in the campaign. Pleading to "change the way you look at things in Washington," Obama offers a structural critique of the nation's life that sounds sincere professional—and stands in sharp contrast to Clinton's rant and bells policy speeches. "The drug and insurance companies have spent \$1.6 billion preventing healthy care reform," he explains, and emphasizes his refusal to take money from special interests or lobbyists. He takes questions on veterans' care, land governance, crop dumping on the developing world, the plight of farm wives, the regulation of big predators, and is forced to dodge yet again an Internet rumor that he plans to retire the Pledge of Allegiance.

When Obama is done speaking, Middleton, the bus driver, is impressed but not persuaded. "It was a good speech," she seems nervous. Did he do better than him again," she says. Tom Quinn, a 51-year-old Republican from

nearby Ellettsburg who is "in the past business," said he was impressed by the speech, but was still troubled by the Wright issue. "It's the tone, the tone, the tone. The Republicans will punish him with it. They are going to stick it online. They were too close for too long. He had four different explanations and people are not buying it. If you think it's ugly now, just wait."

The next day, Obama holds a huge rally in a park in Fort Wayne. The audience is several times what Hillary Clinton drew earlier in the day at the same site, and the crowd is much more diverse. Volunteers serve up bean sandwiches and baked beans. Obama is on stage with his wife, Michelle, who talks about her husband "changing the face of the presidency," and two young daughters, with photographers snapping images of the all-American family.

Earlier in the day in Fort Wayne, across town and barely on the other side of the town tracks from the campaign events, at the all-black Union Square Church where men arrive for Sunday worship in black suits and some women still sport elaborate hats. Letitia Hunter-Rogers, an Obama supporter, shares the same life wisdom as the white women who support Clinton. She doesn't have health insurance, and because of a eye-rolling condition, arthritis, she says it would cost her \$100 to \$600 a month. She also doesn't offer health insurance to the five employees at the small business she co-owns, though she dreams of doing so one day.

But the economic interests that might lend her with working-class whites are overshadowed by race. She once liked the Clintons, she says—and Bill Clinton began making her what she calls recently changed remarks about Obama. "Bill Clinton has turned off



SUPPORTERS love her, but she would face a tough ride from Republicans. The contents of the wedge or its potential impact on their health. "There's a high suspicion level in the African American community," Hunter-Rogers says. "There is a low level of trust. We thought some of the things he said might have been true," she says of Wright's statements that white Americans find outlandish. "But the timing is awful." Hunter-Rogers' pastor, the Rev. Sylvester Hunter, is an imposing bearded man sporting a black panther suit and a broad grin. He

the black community. He played the race card and he played dirty politics. At first I was neutral, but now I won't even vote for Hillary given the nomination, and I've talked to a lot of people who feel the same way."

She identifies more with Obama's leadership than Clinton's. "He has a flavor of what it means to be both black and white in America. He knows what it means to be hated by a single mother." And she has a theory about what's wrong with Clinton: to Obama, "it's really simple. Change is hard. They are uncomfortable with what has been here. She's a white woman and if they don't like a white man, it's the second best thing."

As a phone bank volunteer for Obama, she has encouraged racism when talking about jobs. "When we try to call to ask for votes, we've had people say they would never vote for a black man. I was in the vegetable market the other day wearing an Obama T-shirt, and some people—they were nodding class men—were saying to me that no way would they ever vote for a black man."

Despite her support for Obama, she has harsh words for Rev. Wright. "You have to understand, African American preachers—they're preaching to more whites than they are blacks," she says. "What my pastor says doesn't necessarily reflect what I believe. I think they are blowright out of proportion." When pressed on why there has been more criticism among African Americans of Wright's comments, race is the answer that the U.S. government created AIDS to hurt black people, she has one word: "Zigzag." "You know about Zigzag, don't you? Everyone knows about Zigzag."

Zigzag was an infectious 10-year-long medical experiment run in secret by the U.S. government, in which 100 black men in Alabama infected with syphilis were denied

CLINTON THE IVY LEAGUER IS NOW DROPPIN' HER G'S AS SHE CAMPAIGNS

mentors to doctors could study the fatal progression of the disease. The study was done without informed patient consent, and led to the infection of some of the men's wives and children. It was ended in 1972, and the survivors received \$10,000 as a lawsuit settlement. Bill Clinton issued a formal government apology in 1997. Taskforce showed that the American government could save African Americans and prevent deaths. They attacked a whole community," says Hunter-Rogers. "That's why the talk about AIDS [Rev. Wright] came up on a generation when that was fresh in their minds."

Then she mentions an Associated Press article from April about a federally funded experiment, whose report was published in 2005, in which scientists spread disease-causing bacteria and industrial waste around the backyards in poor black communities in Baltimore and East St. Louis to see whether it would prevent lead in the already contaminated soil from harming young children. The families did not receive full information about

what in the front yard and grates around the contemporary red brick building adorned with wood and stained glass windows. "Because I paint that church, you think of these people believe what I believe?" he checks. Come to point Clinton is a long-term Clinton supporter, and his imagination is usually Obama's eyes. "We have some spread doctors," he says.

Hunter had supported Clinton before Obama got into the race, and was not son to switch sides. "I liked that he fought for health care when she would have stood back. That's when I noticed her strength as a woman and a politician and an individual who thinks for herself," he says he is not offended by Wright's comments, though he doesn't share all his views. "The African American pulpit is totally different than the white pulpit," Hunter says. "There is a right to express political and social opinion. Let Wright be prophetic preacher who believes in his relationship with God. He balances in the relationship he recovers. He has the right to."

Hunter takes an equally relaxed attitude to full Clinton's liberal campaign against Obama earlier this year. "That's just politics," he shrugs. Regardless of who the Democrats nominate, it will be a historic candidacy—with even more divisive politics by November, he predicts. "I would tell Barack Obama, you have not even seen the real politics yet." ■



ISRAEL: LIKE A REPT PARASITE, THEY'RE GURKINS
Savvy Berlin artists have been an sponsor with the plan to place in the Museum of that from never before. The group's members are being told the museum for three weeks from its that that. The piece employs what it means to be a guest, with the museum playing host to the Germans who are hosts to the parasites. Critics have argued the artwork is reminiscent of Nazi propaganda depicting Jews as parasites, but the group says they feel it is unattainable

Missing child's tourist attractions

BY PATRICIA TYLER • The big blue-green eyes of Madeleine McCann haunt millions of missing-child posters across Europe and around the world. She vanished on May 1, 2007, days before her fourth birthday, while on a holiday with her family in the Portuguese resort town of Praia da Luz. In spite of a massive international hunt, she hasn't been seen since. Now, on the first anniversary of her disappearance, speculation that the McCanns case have become ghoulid tourist destinations.



MADELINE'S disappearance has spawned a macabre industry

Patricia Perry, who lives above the now infamous apartment 3A rented by Madeleine's parents for their family vacation, is horrified that the once-dreaming couple, "It's not, you get locked in there," she says. "Can you imagine wanting to come and do that? They must have the apartment and then in front of the window with their children and have photographs taken." While at the resort, they troop over to the nearby tapas bar where Kate and Gerry McCann are the sight of Madeleine's disappearance.

According to residents, the sightseers are usually Spanish or Portuguese holidaymakers. Café owner Ricardo Silva says they usually talk the same question: "Where's Madeleine's house?" After taking snaps of the now famous buildings, they go to the local church, where the McCanns prayed for their daughter's return. A commercial Madeleine tour appears to be appearing. A resort employee says dozens of people get off a bus and then do the rounds on foot. "They were mainly Portuguese," he said the Daily Mail. "I would love to find out who is organizing it so we could ask them to stop."

Little wonder that Gerry McCann, who recently spoke of the "horror upon horror" suffered in the last 12 months, is said to find the town "effusive and heartless." ■

India's crop of farm suicides

CAMERON ARDREY-WORTH-VINCE • Famed American writer and satirist H. L. Menckel once noted that "no one hates his job so heartily as a farmer." When it comes to deploring the suicides felt by farmers killing the fields of India, nothing could be closer to the truth. A recent report released by the computer and auditing giant of India has estimated that suicide rates among farmers in India's Vidarbha region have skyrocketed nearly twofold in recent years—from 146 (in 2000) reported between 2000 and 2004 to a staggering 1,414 documented between April 2006 and March 2007. Furthermore, the problem isn't just isolated to one area. The government estimates that since 1997 more than 165,000 farmers across the country have taken their lives, some in drastic fashion. Many have eaten pesticides to end their lives. Others have eaten pesticides to end their lives. Many have eaten pesticides to end their lives. Many have eaten pesticides to end their lives.

The problem that is propelling Indian farmers to kill themselves are numerous. Natural causes like drought, an absence of proper irrigation facilities and increased cultivation costs are partly to blame. But the government's attempts at setting up relief agencies has also failed to reduce the crisis as these



A WIDOW with a picture of her husband, who killed himself

organizations have been deemed inefficient and corrupt. Another major obstacle is the prominence of moneylenders who charge outrageous interest rates to desperate farmers that are virtually impossible to repay. To wash the epidemic, India announced a \$17 billion debt-relief package for 40 million farmers in March, but it came with the condition that only proper credit bank loans would be returned. To put it another way, nearly a quarter of these farmers are ineligible, thus increasing their frustration. ■

Silencing Radio Free Europe



A CYBERATTACK hit RFE just before a big opposition protest

BY NANCY MACDONALD • The website of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty have been hit by a series of cyberattacks. Initiated late last month, the two-day attack eventually knocked out the servers serving Belarus and seven other sites, and the Prague-based watchdog broadcaster Attackers flooded the station's servers with "data files," shutting them down, says Ottawa-based internet security expert Rafal Rajkowski. In countries like Belarus, where domestic media is weak or unavailable, RFE is a key news source, as it was for the Cold War, when it was the only independent media whose broadcasts reached behind the Iron Curtain.

Though it has no concrete evidence, RFE is accusing the government of Belarus, a regime that has been called the last dictatorship in Europe. Rajkowski accuses with "data files." Government forces used the "crack team techniques" during and immediately after the last election, when the pro-rail opposition was trying to organize protests. Indeed, he says Belarus has been "very innovative" in using cyberwarfare to silence political opposition and independent media. Dubbed an "outpost of tyranny" by the U.S., Belarus has, for 44 years, been ruled by the autocrat president Alexander Lukashenko, who, with the help of the former Soviet republic's security services—still known as the KGB—has been accused of crushing dissent, persecuting independent media and political opposition, as well as rigging presidential elections.

"Decisions are all trying to prevent the kind of unfettered news and information that [Radio Free Europe] provides from reaching their people," said RFE president Jeffrey Goldstein. "They did not succeed in the last century and they will not succeed now," he added, comparing the attack with Soviet-era jamming that blocked radio transmissions in Communist countries. ■



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BUSINESS

DIAMONDS ARE A BRAND'S BEST FRIEND

How a 26-year-old advertising intern saved Shreddies

BY ANNE KROSTON • When Hunter Somerville created the world's first "diamond Shreddie" in September 2006 by pinning a piece of the vaulted whole wheat cereal onto a 45 degree angle, he didn't have a clue it would inspire a landmark ad campaign destined to spark debate at checkout counters and win glowing accolades within the very industry it parodied—all while selling a truck-

load of cereal and revolutionizing a sleepy brand. At the time, though, the vivacious of his cereal play didn't envision a "Eureka!" moment. "I thought it was the stupidest, worst idea ever," he says. The 26-year-old intern at the Toronto ad agency Ogilvy & Mather was grappling with the sort of job interns are saddled with—in this case, thinking up a fun concept for the back of the Shreddies box. Meanwhile, the agency's senior creative brains were working on client Post Cereals' request for a big idea that would get customers thinking about the 67-year-old cereal again. Shreddies, sold only in Canada, the U.S. and New Zealand, comprises a big part

of Post's cereal portfolio, says Jennifer Harrison, Post's director of marketing. Yet the brand had not had a major marketing push since the cartoon Shreddies, "Freddie" and "Eddie," served as mascots some 37 years ago, in the days when the cereal was known by the misquid jingle "Good, good, whole wheat boring brands," says Nancy Ward, Ogilvy's chief creative officer, one of the master minds behind Dove's heralded "soap campaign for real beauty."

Somerville, a native of London, Ont., had been working

on Post's cereal portfolio, says Jennifer Harrison, Post's director of marketing. Yet the brand had not had a major marketing push since the cartoon Shreddies, "Freddie" and "Eddie," served as mascots some 37 years ago, in the days when the cereal was known by the misquid jingle "Good, good, whole wheat boring brands," says Nancy Ward, Ogilvy's chief creative officer, one of the master minds behind Dove's heralded "soap campaign for real beauty."

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THIS TV spot captured the demise of the square Shreddie as a factory flop

at Ogilvy for three months, it was his second ad agency job after a failed start on the improv circuit. "I got into advertising because I thought I could write funnier than what was out there," he explains. That was the extent of his ambition for the back of the box, he says. "I figured if I can't write the big idea, I might as well make them laugh." When Somerville's "old square Shreddie" new diamond-shaped Shreddie idea was unveiled to the senior Ogilvy team, he wasn't even present. People laughed and loud, work results. The concept was based upon the basis of a larger campaign that would encompass billboard, tele-

vision, print and the Internet, as well as a new "Diamond Shreddies" box. This was born the world's first advertising campaign to actually reuse the product being sold. By offering an old product on its side, it really, it succeeded in taking a fresh in "new" imagination as well. And in the process, it also showed the hollow trigger or new clothes essence of "new and improved" product boxes and suggested attempts to update classic brands. In such a landscape, the most radical change is, well, for it to change at all. Such a meta move was-

ability, of course, has become a cultural staple, familiar in view of *Borat* or *The Daily Show* or *The Colbert Report*. There should be little surprise Somerville has joined Colbert, posted on the wall of a Twitter. "He's a genius," he says. "It's his sense, which is like the sense of this campaign. Whenever I get stuck on something I think, 'How would Stephen Colbert do this?'"

Just as *The Colbert Report* is a live news show mirroring the conventions of an actual news show, the creative path of the "new" Diamond Shreddies campaign traced the footsteps of an actual "new" cereal launch. Comedian Kerry Griffin conducted focus

PHOTOGRAPH BY JEFF HARRIS

MAGLEANS MAY 19 08

group, interviewing 11 people before video cameras. The Ogilvy team expected video to spring from people taking offense at being treated like food and looking back at Griffin. That didn't happen. Rather, the spots serve as case studies in genuine consumer acceptance. Participants politely answered shared questions such as "Does this diamond strand taste better than the square one?" ("It had more punch," answered one man, nodding), and "Rank Diamond Shreddies an animal, from an antelope up to an elephant?" ("A kangaroo," and one woman). One man who said he thought the two types looked the same was asked where Griffin made the analogy with the underbitten one. "When you turn a snout it's a smile," Griffin told him patiently. "But a snout's very different from a smile." The proceedings also highlighted the dubious efficacy of focus groups, one of the

accusations of advertising agency DDB Canada. "It's nice to have a brave client ready to do something new—in this case releasing an old cereal and turning it on its side. It's bold stuff," he says. "The hard thing when creating a brand that's been around forever is not blending into the wallpaper," observes John Bradley, who runs the online marketing consultancy Think Strategic Solutions Inc., after working as a creative director with Cadbury for decades. Bradley admires the modishness of the Diamond Shreddies approach. "What I love is that it brings you back to the core product. It didn't take the easy route of launching a line extension. It has all of the benefits of reuse and retention and pseudo 'new' (even though it's old Shreddies and I'd forgotten how much I loved them, it *definitely* sounds old)." The fact that it is so singular is an endorsement of the current state of creative

side." But enough did get it to lead to sales increases that far exceeded expectations.

The national rollout in January 2008 featured the new Diamond Shreddies box boasting a "one-on-one 30 diamonds" contest. The "is it a joke? Is it not a joke?" debate quickly went viral. Focus group videos were posted on YouTube, alongside a slew of rants discrediting the cereal. In "Diamond Shreddies? Well, it's a teenage girl's dream." They could have at least made it a triangle! "The way we see it, people not getting it is good," says Veek, who shoves off emails from people gushing about the campaign's brilliance. Engagement is such that more than 30,000 people have noted online for their favorite shape (the diamond is currently ahead by a thin margin). "It's nice to see this kind of emotional chord struck," Veek says.

The ad industry too has been captivated.



HE KNOWS
THAT HIS IS A
CINDERELLA STORY.
'AND I'M THE PRETTIEST
GIRL AT THE
BALL.'

HUNTER SOMERVILLE, a native of London, Ont., decided to try the advertising business after a failed stint on the improv circuit.

after the advertising industry woodpecks in Veek concede they possess a final flaw: "I don't think people always say what they really think," she says. When told they'd been paraded, all but one participant agreed to allow the footage to be aired.

Such focus media remind a modern court, tailored to consumer both savvy and cynical about marketing machinations, says Toronto-based advertising executive John Dargatzis. "It wouldn't have worked 20 years ago," he says. "But in this incredibly media-savvy world everybody gets the joke. You don't have to spell everything out."

The premise also subverted the "square," straight-ahead image of Post's parent, Kraft Foods, purveyor of Clueless. What "People say I can't believe Kraft bought that, but it was no may say," says Veek. "We loved it," says Dargatzis.

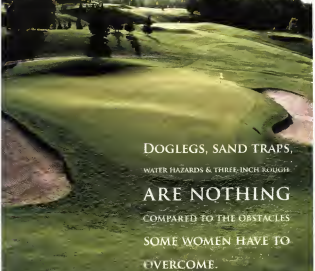
It was a risk in an industry where clients are risk-averse, notes Frank Palmer, chief

executive of advertising agency DDB Canada. "It's nice to have a brave client ready to do something new—in this case releasing an old cereal and turning it on its side. It's bold stuff," he says. "The hard thing when creating a brand that's been around forever is not blending into the wallpaper," observes John Bradley, who runs the online marketing consultancy Think Strategic Solutions Inc., after working as a creative director with Cadbury for decades. Bradley admires the modishness of the Diamond Shreddies approach. "What I love is that it brings you back to the core product. It didn't take the easy route of launching a line extension. It has all of the benefits of reuse and retention and pseudo 'new' (even though it's old Shreddies and I'd forgotten how much I loved them, it *definitely* sounds old)." The fact that it is so singular is an endorsement of the current state of creative

side." But enough did get it to lead to sales increases that far exceeded expectations. The popular site creativity-online.com ranked the Diamond Shreddies campaign "best in the world" for a few weeks. Its agency is described on an advertising blog. "This is an example as to how public the public really is," reads one post on CanadianMarketingBlog.com. "It's the same cereal that I remember as a child, boring and tasteless...if you're excited for Diamond Shreddies, it's evident that you are a slave to marketing and advertising." Another poster disagrees. "Possibly my favorite campaign of all time—perfectly simple and almost conflict-free. Consumers along the lines of: 'This is the exact same cereal, just turned 45 degrees' or 'It hasn't changed anything, they just want to sell more Shreddies' are almost as entertaining as the campaign itself."

The industry is doubly impressed because it knows how difficult selling cereal can be. "People love their cereal," says Mary Medveder, creative editor of Strategic, a trade

publications by Jeff Leavelle, Robert V. Kozminski



DOGLEGS, SAND TRAPS,
WATER HAZARDS & THREE-INCH ROUGH
ARE NOTHING
COMPARED TO THE OBSTACLES
SOME WOMEN HAVE TO
OVERCOME.

The Scotiabank Women's Charity Challenge
with Alena Sharp, Annika Sorenstam and Morgan Pressel.

On May 20th, Alena, Annika and Morgan will tee off with us! Supporting sponsors, including Investments and KPMG, and team sponsors including Medley's, at Magna Golf Club in Aurora, Ontario.

Together, we're aiming to build on the \$100,000 raised for women's charities since Canada over the past two years, including Little Women for Little Women of Afghanistan. It's the one day to golf we'll all look to see high numbers.

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magnate for the marketing industry. "And people love their cereal the way it is. Striking a new one is problematic for brands in terms of shelf space and supporting eight million varieties. So from a product perspective, the notion of refreshing a brand, and making it new and getting some attention without changing it is really a brilliant one. That's why people in the marketing community love it. People on the agency side loved it because it was a simple, pure idea. It was just wow!"

McLodder praised the way the campaign has engaged the marketplace. "It's brilliant from the point of view of getting people involved in a way that they're engaged, not annoyed but intrigued. So much advertising that doesn't have a good idea has to make noise another way, and it's the noisy

message that is unclear. Heithorn says they will be phased out when the "win a diamond" boxes are all sold. The brand has been revived in consumers' minds, she says, with buzz translating into national sales increases in the double digits.

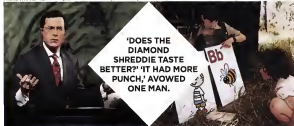
Wink wants to keep the campaign rolling. "We're playing what we're going to do next," she says. (There are badger mascots of a Diamond Shreddie "reel," another risky play given the negative associations with "reel" in the consumer lens approach.) Wink predicts the Diamond Shreddie approach will influence the way both Shreddies and Kraft advertise. "Most consumers come and go," she says. "But this one altered the history of the brand." Within Kraft, the campaign has become a touchstone against which new pitches are measured, says Heithorn.

says it belongs in a new genre. "It's more in the category of a hugely successful premiere," he says. "It will be around for sure."

Hopes are high at Ogilvy that the work will be rewarded at next week's Clio Awards in Miami, a big event in the American advertising calendar. They're the winners up for the prestigious Cannes Lions awards, the Academy Awards of international advertising, in France this June. The June award of Strategy, to be distributed at the event, will feature the cover line "Canada comes to talk heads at Cannes," illustrated with a Diamond Shreddie.

Already a star in home in Toronto, who watched full time at Ogilvy as a copywriter in January 2007. His current client list includes Shreddies as well as Post's Honeycomb, for which he invented, for Ray, a wild

THEIR SHOULD BE Bibo surprises. Santanilla has a photo of Stephen Colbert posted on his office wall. Bee Boy in a TV ad for MasterCard



noise, the noise that does annoy you. This is the opposite of that." Indeed, Diamond Shreddies has taken on a life of its own culturally. In April, George Gould, a retired lawyer in Surrey, B.C., with a penchant for humor, made the news when he stomped off "the last square Shred die" as they. He sent Kraft a mock note requesting confirmation as to whether he making any more square Shreddies. He received back an earnest form letter explaining "Diamond Shreddies are simply a square Shred die piece that has been turned in a 45 degree angle. We hope that this encourages people who eat Shreddies to look at Shreddies as a whole new way—and to have a good laugh as well!" The company also sent Gould a free coupon that he used along with his USAF medal from the "last square Shred die" to buy eight boxes of Diamond Shreddies, later donated to a local food bank.

Whether the Diamond Shreddie boxes will become collectors' items destined for

Industry wenchers are laughing too. "The internet is seeing how the campaign develops," says Shredley. "My worry would be that this parody continues the over idea, which is not something people have great Shreddies are. They've got to stay focused on keeping attention on Shreddies. It's hard to keep that kind of campaign focused on original objectives and it's easy to get carried away with the fun and creativity of reaching industry conventions."

Industry consultant Burghardt believes the Diamond Shred die could go down as one of the great Canadian ads, though he

child raised by bees. "It's a cereal killer," he jokes. His Diamond Shreddies home run because him. Shredley was his favorite cereal growing up, he says. (Of his breakfast food epiphany, he is modest. "It was a fluke," he says. "You could make a really bad Coo Coo movie about it." Still, he knows his is a Cinderella story. "And I'm the prettiest girl at the ball," he says with Colbert-esque mock seriousness. There's one other effect of the campaign he can't shake, he says. "I think I've given myself Shred-die syndrome. Because I do believe the diamonds taste better. It sounds stupid, but they really do." ■

**EMPLOYEE
of the
WEEK**

JAPAN'S MOST PRODUCTIVE PORN SURFER

A Japanese civil servant has been demoted for visiting porn sites more than 700,000 times over nine months while at work. None of his colleagues noticed his unusual surfing habits, and he was only discovered when his computer became infected with a virus, and his Web browser history was checked. Upon discovery, the man, whose name is not being released to the public, was not fired. However his pay was docked by \$190 a month.

Exploding the myth of the 'rogue trader'



STEVE MASCH

Things were already falling apart for Nick Leeson (see, 14, 1995). But then a 25-year-old derivatives trader, working in Singapore, for Britain's venerable brokerage Bantek, suddenly comes forward, and suddenly everything seems "What hidden didn't

know was that for three years he'd been hiding enormous trading losses in a so-called trading account, and those losses had been loaded onto the name of William of Gaskin.

That night, Leeson entered an innocuous "straddle trade" on the Singapore and Tokyo stock markets. It was a bet that not much would happen to Asian stock overnight. But in the wee hours of Jan. 17 the Kobe earth quake hit, Japan's market plunged and Leeson went into a death spiral. Like a poker player who makes increasingly desperate bets on six cold cards, Leeson's losses kept kept on compounding. On Feb. 26, with his losses totaling US\$1.4 billion, he left a note on his desk that read "I'm sorry" and hopped on a plane for Malaysia. The deception was quickly uncovered and within a few days Bantek collapsed and Leeson was arrested.

For the next 40 years Leeson sat in a Singapore prison, convicted of fraud and forgery. Inside, he was served dinner papers, was diagnosed with colon cancer, and wrote a book called *Rogue Trader*. He survived the cancer, was released from prison and eventually achieved something like redemption.

This week, Leeson will be in Toronto to speak to the alumni association of the University of Western Ontario's Richard Bay School of Business about risk management and the psychology of a trader. "As individuals and leaders, it is imperative that we learn how to recognize and correct the fatal flaws that may be lurking within our own organizations," he says in his press release.

That's an interesting idea. We'll see to believe that Leeson can offer us more than a voyeuristic glimpse into the dark side of high finance. We'll like to think he can provide a blueprint for the mind of a trader, and lead us to the key to preventing these kinds of disasters.

But he can't do any of that. And, truth be told, you don't even have to pretend here very hard to find his advice as such. "I've tried I don't have the answer," Leeson said over the phone last week from his home in western Ireland. "The lesson are not learned. The pursuit of profit still overpowers everything

else that happens in the financial industry." Sure, he has a few ideas for dealing with financial markets—tougher prison sentences, more aggressive and sophisticated internal controls, personality testing for traders. But he's quick to acknowledge that none of it stands a chance when stacked up against the massive rewards heaped upon the boldest players in the financial world.

Financial traders happen for the same reason that most cars do. The car owner buys a lower class vehicle because it's statistically possible without crashing. But both driver and owner know that there's no price for



Nick Leeson can't prevent a fraud. No one can.

driving safely around the track and being a convincing competitor. Winning everything, and the same holds true in the financial world. The incentives are all geared toward the maximization of profit, period. And the maximization of profit is a direct function of the risk you are willing and able to take.

Prudent institutions have internal controls, but they won't be enough for Nick Leeson. In 1995, As he points out, "internal audit departments and compliance departments just don't attract the same calibre of people as the trading desks. They totally lacked the ability to intelligently question what was going on."

Nothing has changed in that regard. If anything the gulf between the audience and the trader has only widened along with the growing complexity of financial alchemy.

That's why, more than a decade after his collapse, Scott's Gematria lost close to \$5 billion last year, allegedly due to another and speculation by a trader named Hiroshi Kawai. Despite the high-profile disaster, there is no incentive for bankers to address that inhibitor because internal auditors don't make money, traders do. And so CEO over earned a bonus for missing in the money column.

In that sense, there is nothing so much as a "rogue trader." In 2006, University of Massachusetts business professor Ian Greenberg published a paper examining the Bantek collapse and exploding the myth myth. "When over significant financial trading fraud occurs, the central protagonist is always portrayed as a 'rogue trader'." In 2006, University of Massachusetts business professor Ian Greenberg published a paper examining the Bantek collapse and exploding the myth myth. "When over significant financial trading fraud occurs, the central protagonist is always portrayed as a 'rogue trader'." In 2006, University of Massachusetts business professor Ian Greenberg published a paper examining the Bantek collapse and exploding the myth myth. "When over significant financial trading fraud occurs, the central protagonist is always portrayed as a 'rogue trader'."

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Is Canada ready for plug-in cars?

BY KATE LONIAZ • Plug-in electric cars are coming. Are Canada's utilities ready?

Spurred by consumer demand and green legislation (California recently ruled the no largest automaker must sell 55,333 plug-in hybrids from 2012 to 2014), industry giant General Motors Corp., General Motors Corp. and Ontario-based Magna International Inc. are aiming to put new models on the road within just two years. These vehicles would rely primarily on electricity power (like today's hybrids that switch to a gas engine at high speeds), and "will make emissions more important than oil companies," GM spokesman Robert Peterson recently predicted.



THE CHEVY VOLT will be phasing into Canada's hybrid grid soon

Because next-generation hybrids are designed to be recharged overnight from household electricity, utility providers (which generally see a dip in demand at night) could boost their sales—and the efficiency of their power plants—as a result. In Ontario, where nuclear plants generate over 90 per cent of electricity generation, "you're [a] decrease or decrease in power requirement," says Don Smith, director of market evolution for Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator. At night, then, "we have a large source of capacity" for plug-in electric cars, he says.

But scuttle from the U.S. Department of Energy's Grid Risk National Laboratory says that they may fall to late hours (when rates are low), "Consumers" would have to be willing to when convenient," says Don Smith, director of market evolution for Ontario's Independent Electricity System Operator. At night, then, "we have a large source of capacity" for plug-in electric cars, he says.

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Newspapers lose readers even faster

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • Last week, the Capital Times, a 96-year-old newspaper in Madison, Wis., stopped printing, but it didn't take too long to completely. Rather, the paper cut 30 staff the editors and moved its operations entirely to the Web. In doing so, it laid out the industry's worst nightmare.

It's no small secret that things have been going badly for the newspaper industry for years now. Newspapers big and small have been struggling with the same troubles that haunted the Capital Times—falling revenue and sinking circulation, but the latest circulation data in the U.S. suggests the problem may be even more than once thought, in readers and advertisers alike are moving online at an alarming rate.

The New York Times, which this month announced it is cutting 200 newsroom jobs, saw its circulation drop almost four per cent in the previous year, according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation. As the Los Angeles Times, it fell more than five per cent. While most of the 10 largest papers in the U.S. experienced declines, the biggest drops were among mid-sized newspapers, such as the Boston Globe, where circulation was down more than eight per cent. "We think the industry was expecting an improvement in trend and that we view this result with some degree of alarm," said Deutsche MediaPartners Paul Owsen, in a report last week.

It's not all doom and gloom, however. As the U.S. newsroom cuts, some companies have cut back on their advertising (the lifeblood of the industry). More advertisers predict three or four dollars less ad dollars. Media buyers will increasingly shift to the Internet, and newspapers may face a hard choice: move online or die.

Newspapers already have websites, but for now, they are filled with advertisements supplied by the print operation. And while people may be moving online for their news, revenue isn't following as quickly. That leaves many wondering where the money will come from if they do follow their readers to the Web. One thing is certain: They're watching how the Capital Times fares closely.



THE CAPITAL TIMES were forced online: will it survive?

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A new show from Livent, and it's free

BY DEAN HOGG • Fifty years ago, Gerb Dushinsky was Canada's first entertainment king. As the founder of Livent, he gave Toronto a thriving glimpse of the glitz and glam of New York and London with his landmark productions of *The Phantom of the Opera* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Starting this week, Dushinsky and Livent co-founder Myron Gorkin are putting on a new kind of show.



AFTER 10 years, Dushinsky finally has his day in court

It's taking place in a Toronto courtroom, and the tickets are free. Key parts will be played by Canada's most famous lawyer brothers, Edward and Brian Gorkin, who will be representing Dushinsky and Gorkin respectively. The changes have been whittled down to three, from the original 10 courts filed in 2002. Two are related to commercial fraud alleged to have occurred when Livent went public in 1991 and during subsequent operations, plus a claim about alleged charges of bribery going into the deal, which is expected to last four to six weeks, there are three going forward, which will take more than 10 years to bring Dushinsky and Gorkin to trial. Will they be convicted? And what will happen if they are?

James Martin, a Toronto lawyer and past president of the Ontario Bar Association, has been following the case closely. He agrees it has taken forever to get to court, but says that 10 years is usually not unheard of for commercial fraud. "These cases require intense forensic analysis and vast amounts of disclosure," he says. "Considering how complex this case is going to be, the suit was on the long side, but not unreasonable."

As for how the trial will progress, Martin thinks it will be a hard case for the Crown to make. "This isn't like a fraud case where someone sold a diamond ring that turned out to be cubic zirconium. If the fraud took place, it was very sophisticated," he says. "This was a complex case to go to court, the suit was on the long side, but not unreasonable."

According to his lawyer, Gorkin is similarly optimistic about the outcome. Good thing, because if they are convicted, the lawsuit could face up to 100 years in jail.

DOCTORS FOR HIRE

Half of the Canadians trained in Ireland don't come home

BY ANN KINGTON • The sick state of the Canadian health care system can be seen very clearly from Ireland, where close to 400 Canadians currently study medicine—up from 100 in 2000. These aspiring doctors are part of the estimated 1,400 Canadian doctors out of 100,000 in Ireland who have come to work in the country's medical system. Despite a dire doctor shortage, Canada often just over 2,000 free-year medical school slots annually, slightly more than seven per 100,000 people (by comparison, the U.K. has 13 openings per 100,000 people).

Ireland's medical schools have become a go-to destination. The recruitment process is led by the Atlantic Bridge Program, a Newport Beach, Calif.-based agency that coordinates all North American applications, a service paid for by the schools. To meet ever-growing demand, the University of Limerick set up a medical program last year.

The offspring of Canadian candidates is high, says Peter Nisken, Atlantic Bridge's Dublin-based director, who serves as liaison between "graduate" Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) results and universities. Despite, though, few schools don't require them. Unlike Canada, only one school—Dublin's Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland—requires an entrance exam. Two schools offer a six-year program for students straddling straight out of high school, the exception in Ireland. One-third of North American applicants select this route, among them Toronto-born Gary Klar, who will be graduating from RCSI this year at age 24. Like many, Klar speaks of the experience glowingly: "The best thing I ever did."

Their? Well, for starters, from at least three times that of Canadian schools. (Charging non-EU students anywhere from \$50,000 to \$70,000 alone helped to offset the free medical training provided to its own citizens.) A higher cost of living up the Irish diet burden. Most students find a source for support, as the medical industry slowly by loans can face debt bordering on half a million dollars. The greatest frustration for many, though, is the prospect of permanent professional immigration. Once trained abroad, any Canadian-trained medical doctor is considered international Medical Councils or IMCs. As such, they compete with non-Canadians for a limited number of IMG

residency positions, many of which require a five-year postgraduate work stint in Canada.

Reverse one half to three-quarters of Irish-trained Canadian don't come home. Six of the 30 Canadian graduates from RCSI this year have returned to Canadian residencies, says 24-year-old Andrew Ryan of Ottawa, who snagged a spot in orthopedics at the University of Toronto. Theirs is a rare rise with the system, he says. "People say, 'I paid for my own education while students in Canada are subsidized. Then they're making me go to the doctor for another five years.'"

CANADIAN Andrew Buckett says his Irish medical school experience has been rewarding.



U.S. AND AUSTRALIAN RESIDENCY PROGRAMS COURT GRADS

Andrew Buckett, a 22-year-old fourth-year medical student at the University College Cork, acts as a mentor to Canadians applying to the school. His experience has been formative, he says. "The best advice students to keep applying to Canadian and U.S. schools. 'This year is a long time to be chronically stressed out about your future,' he says.

American and Australian residency programs court the Irish grad years, says Buckett. So do some senior Canadian candidates.

In January, Beth Jacques, mayor of The Pas, Manitoba, visited Klar, who is returning to an orthopedic residency in Manitoba, which does not require IMGs to do a five-year service contract, says that a lot of his classmates second great residencies in the U.S. "There's no home," he says. Ontario, on the other hand, is viewed so problematic that no student from Trinity College's 2007 graduating class bothered applying.

"Ottawa is attractive to IMGs," says David MacPherson, a family practitioner in Kingston, Ont., whose wife graduated from Trinity in 2005. The Canadian Medical Association is amenable to the idea of accepting select offshore schools, says president Brian Day. "Until more openings exist in

Canada, we have to look at other options. But a newly discovered letter from his private correspondence with their prime minister Pierre Trudeau reveals an equally heated debate was going on behind the scenes. The letter, uncovered in the National Archives by historian George Ignatiev, was written on Aug. 18, 1973, just after the police in Montreal raided Morgentaler's office and charged her with performing illegal abortions. Lash out at the government's refusal to legalize abortion laws, Morgentaler writes that he has performed abortions on some of Trudeau's relatives, as well as those of other cabinet ministers. "Do I have to convince you really of the hypocrisy of the present laws?" he writes. This letter is somewhat full-on, even threatening, but it is also a desperate plea for the prime minister's compassion.

And it is also a plea for the doctor's dignity. "I am not a doctor of the law," he writes. "I am a doctor of the law."

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DEAR PIERRE

A private letter to the PM had Morgentaler naming names

BY COLIN CAMPBELL • In his decade-long struggle to legalize abortion, Henry Morgentaler became one of Canada's most controversial figures. In the courts, on television, in newspapers, the abortion doctor fought and won the pro-choice cause. He paid a price for it too, from death threats and jail to losing his clinical license.

But a newly discovered letter from his private correspondence with their prime minister Pierre Trudeau reveals an equally heated debate was going on behind the scenes. The letter, uncovered in the National Archives by historian George Ignatiev, was written on Aug. 18, 1973, just after the police in Montreal raided Morgentaler's office and charged her with performing illegal abortions. Lash out at the government's refusal to legalize abortion laws, Morgentaler writes that he has performed abortions on some of Trudeau's relatives, as well as those of other cabinet ministers. "Do I have to convince you really of the hypocrisy of the present laws?" he writes. This letter is somewhat full-on, even threatening, but it is also a desperate plea for the prime minister's compassion.

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Morgentaler follows with another sharp swipe in Trudeau, suggesting his reaction is based on fear of the Catholic party in Quebec, which strongly supported the Catholic Church's position on abortion. In doing so, Morgentaler "putting the dagger into 'the doc' in a very shrewd way," says Ignatiev, a professor at the University of British Columbia. As Morgentaler correctly suggests in the letter, Trudeau, even with a minority government, could have changed the law with the support of a willing NDP party, says Ignatiev. "Would it be wrong to conclude that the rights of women have been sacrificed on the altar of political expediency?" asks Morgentaler.

There's little doubt Morgentaler is driven in part by the urgency of his situation. At the bottom of the typed, two-page letter, he scribbles that the police have just told him he is facing five more charges and will be arrested. "Have they gone insane?" he adds as a final postscript. But his tone softens markedly at the end. He appeals to Trudeau as "a man, who strongly believes in justice and civil liberties for all men and women," and he concludes that his criticism comes "without any malice whatsoever." "I also want to assure you that I refer to prominent people having had safe abortions at my clinic it is not with the intention of embarrassing anyone but only to bring into sharper focus the hypocrisy and absurdity of the law."

He seems sincere in arguing that his real aim is to threaten Trudeau. Pierre D'Neale, an anti-abortion activist who provided the letter to Maclean's, argues it reveals Morgentaler to be either "a sinister phony or a foolish idiot." But certainly not a black-and-white being imprisoned in 1977 and fighting many charges, Morgentaler didn't publicly repeat his harshest of these accusations (Morgentaler, now 64, didn't respond to requests to comment on the letter).

The real mystery may be what inspired the move to raid on Trudeau, who was a Catholic, but also not exactly unopinionated to Morgentaler's point of view. History suggests it ultimately had little effect. It would be another 25 years before Morgentaler's case in a 1988 Supreme Court decision, finally won the debate against what he called Canada's "arbitrary and discriminatory" laws. ■



the day before I was made!"

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ANCIENT NEW MEXICO: PIDO THE SPIRIT GUIDE

It seems that for ancient Native Americans, dogs were much more than pets. Hundreds of anthropologists have been found buried with human skeletons in the southwestern U.S. and Mexico. One of the most famous is a dog named "Pit" at the Museum of Indian Arts and Culture in Santa Fe, N.M., believed the dead dog served as a spirit guide to help spirits into the next world. The dog burials were most common between 400 BCE and 1000 CE, the says.

TRY A GULP OF PIG PLACENTA FOR PAINLESS SKIN

The latest beauty tip to Japan is a refreshing drink that claims to remove the skin and prevent the signs of aging. The active ingredient is pig placenta. The liquid can be drunk or dabbed on skin or sun-damaged skin for a flawless complexion. The product, called Placenta 10,000, costs about \$8 and contains 10,000 mg of the derived substance. Luckily, the product looks nothing like placenta, but of peach-like liquid.



LEFT: MICHAEL GOODMAN/GETTY IMAGES; RIGHT: JEFFREY M. HARRIS/GETTY IMAGES



BURSTING THE CHINESE BABY BUBBLE

China has been making it harder for foreigners to adopt. How hard? Well, with the backlog building, prospective parents could, as of this week, be looking at an arrival date of 2016. BY KATRINA ONSTAD

In a community centre in downtown Toronto on a cold January afternoon, a group of little Chinese girls in red dresses and white tights sit in rows. About 14 POPS ("prospective adoptive parents") were lined up, each sitting in a chair facing the girls and their mothers, every one of them their first introduction to a local adoption agency called Open Arms or International Adoption, hoping to learn the ins and outs of adopting from China.

Michael Sims sat in the second row, taking in the familiar scene: he and his wife, Steph and Holbert, had attended a seminar much like this one in the very same room about three years earlier. "It's a very powerful advertisement," he says. "You have a room full of desperate people, many of whom are desperate of having a child, and you bring in happy people with their happily adopted children and have them play in front of you. It's like laughing on acid in front of a crack addict."

According to Sims's recollection of the afternoon, five white women, between the ages of about 35 and 40, sat in the front of the room and talked about adopting from China. A PWP at the back of the room asked about waiting times. One of the presenters sat about two pairs. The audience member replied that another Ontario agency was saying the waiting time had increased to about five or six years. Sims recalls that Deborah Moss, who runs the Open Arms agency and declined to be interviewed for this story, called out from her place in the back of the room and adamantly stated two years.

Sims felt himself getting angry. He and Stephanie (both of whom are bi-racial of race) had struggled with infertility issues for a year, and then made an enthusiastic decision to adopt. Two years in, they were burnt out and fed up. Married with two kids of perverse cuteness, Sims had driven to the information session to see what new parents were being told. In his pocket was a handful of letters stating that adopting a healthy child from China today could take five years or longer. Sims, a former expatriate and Web programmer, had internetted a calculator for parents waiting to adopt from China, and posted it on a website he built called chinaadoptione.com.

forever.com. Using weighted averages based on the length of time people in the past had been waiting for their "miracle" (when the files processed in China, and a child assigned to the PWP), the tool was, in January, estimating between five and eight years for families just beginning the process. That week, with the backlog building, the calculator predicted an estimated bring-home date of 2016. "You see these letters saying to pass up the child, and you have to say, please don't do it," says Sims.

During the break of tea and cookies, Sims attempted to head out his flyers. Some of the parents were suspicious. "What are you selling?" they asked. Moss saw what he was doing and told her colleagues, shouting that she would call the police. She followed him out.

"What a perfect ending to this whole thing," says Sims, shaking his head in the living room of his modern downtown home. "No Chinese baby, and a donor donating me my back."

We are supposed to be living in a global age, a post-modern Obama world that grants the planet images of Angelina Jolie and her husband Brad Pitt representing the new modern family, and international adoption is the template. In 1970 there were 10 inter-country adoptions in Canada. By the mid '90s, the number had increased to 3,000, with roughly one-third of those coming from China. China's long been the most desired international adoption program in the world, even with a current price tag of more than \$13,000. After China began a effort to cut and population through an official one-child policy in 1979, many babies (almost always the less desirable sex, female) were abandoned. Overflying orphanages provided much wanted children to Western parents whose money was used to improve care and help build a smooth, highly predictable program: between 2002 and 2006, an adoptive couple could expect to come home with a child at months after starting the process.

A new anthology, called *The Lucky Ones: Our Stories of Adopting Children From China*, is a kind of love letter to the program, with essays from 22 Canadian charting the path to adoptive parenthood. CBC *News Sunday*

anchor Ellen Soliman, writes about the joy of welcoming with his new daughter in the hotel pool in Christchurch after meeting her. Actress Jessica Sims recounts the shock and elation when she and her husband receive a referral for a boy baby, not a girl.

The book brims with the kind of happy endings that inspired thousands to get in line. Between 1990 and 2006, Chinese out over 52,000 children around the world. As Cathy Murphy, director of adoption services for the Children's Bridge, an Ottawa-headquartered international adoption agency, says: "There's a comfort level with China. Everyone knows someone who has adopted from China. But that picture is changing."

She's right: the system that makes The Lucky Ones book almost anonymous. The very idea of international adoption seems to be changing in a moment of deep reconsideration, despite Brangelinas and Madonnas. For the past three years, the number of international adoptions in Canada has been on a steady decline. In 2006, Canadians adopted 1,393 children from abroad, down nearly 18 per cent from 1,671 in 2005. Most dramatically, the number of Canadian adoptions from China dropped from 1,001 in 2004 to 668 in 2006.

Speculation abounds as to why this is happening, but getting solid information out of China is as difficult as the adoption issue in any other. The most obvious reason is supply and demand. For years, the China Center for Adoption Affairs (CCAA), the Chinese government agency responsible for adoption, has claimed there are more people wanting children than there are children available. But in a country as populous as China, where the one-child policy was recently renewed, where are the babies?

Murphy blames the shift in China to South Korea's transformation. South Korea has had one of the most successful international adoption programs in the world since the '50s, but the number of children sent down decreased dramatically as the country's economy flourished in the '80s and '90s. In other words, China is getting rich enough to look after its own babies, and many local nannies and families are now able to absorb the fees associated with having more than one child.

Murphy has seen the changes first-hand, having adopted a daughter from China 16 years ago. "Her father barely could barely afford a bicycle. When we went back last year, they had a car," she says. "The road to the orphanage was a dirt road, now it's a four-lane highway."

Sims says that a company called Reach Out was out of Salt Lake City, Utah, that marketed and sold children's names. They sell various adoptive parents DVDs about

the orphanage and region where their children began their lives, even showing some of the common locations where babies are abandoned. For a fee, they will also issue a baby's "finding ad," but photos the government places in the newspaper when a child is first found.

In his work, Bray has visited nearly 50 orphanages. These days, when the orphanage directors aren't going, they tell him the same thing: "It's going down." But the donors need to going up, likely because Chinese women are postponing pregnancy until later, and because the stigma of a girl child is decreasing. "There are millions of couples inside China who are unable to have their own children. Most of these families are very desirous to have a family to carry on their name," says Bray.

Before 2010 in China, the only people who could adopt were couples with no children. But since 2011, the Chinese have been legally allowed to adopt a second child, a strategy

convention's primary goal is to protect the best interests of children by bringing a level of transparency to adoption proceedings and thereby governing systemic corruption, and the abduction and sale of children. But the Hague convention also states that children should be raised wherever possible in their home country, an intuitively positive stance that has also made it harder to adopt from countries that have ratified the agreement. In Bulgaria, for instance, a child can be adopted out only after three Bulgarian families have rejected him or her, and it's become close to impossible to adopt from that country now. As it's become easier for some Chinese to

Servicio Society, an adoption agency in North Vancouver. "As babies in China play their cards so close to their chest we're left with a guess. It's not impossible that things could improve, but I highly doubt it. The pendulum seems to be swinging away from international adoption around the world."

Earlier this year, reports of stuffed animals at the CCMA led to widespread panic amongst waiting parents on message boards, many of whom interpreted the alleged lapdogs as another sign that the program was shutting down completely. The latest indication that things are getting harder for adoptive parents is word from several recently returned

families that donations—the portion of the fee that goes entirely to the orphanage, usually in American dollars—were rising in some orphanages from \$1,000 to \$15,000. All of that means outside China sound like the bad boy friend who doesn't have the

Any prospective parent with a body mass index above 40 or a facial deformity or blindness in one eye need not apply



A PSE ADOPTION interview in China (left), Spanish families pose with their new babies

that circumvents the one-child policy. Adoption is particularly popular with families that have a boy already and now want a girl, according to Bray. The systematically balanced family is an ideal, but one available only to the very wealthy. Bray's research suggests that it costs a Chinese family between 10,000 to 20,000 yuan, or approximately \$1,500 to \$4,000, to adopt (the CCMA did not return requests for an interview). By comparison, the average urban worker makes 25,000 yuan a year. Adoption is a privilege available only to the top economic tier of the Chinese population, but in the new China, this tier consists of millions of people.

"We can only look at children being raised in their own countries as a good thing," says Bray, who has three adopted Chinese daughters himself. "We should be happy 'We should wish that every country could find their program."

This new emphasis on domestic adoption follows the spirit of The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Inter-country Adoption, an international agreement that's been ratified by 75 countries, including China in 2007. The

adoption, China has been making it harder for foreigners to do the same. The CCMA issued a long list of new rules for FAPs on May 1, 2007: adoption is open only to straight married couples; partners must be between 30 and 50 with \$50,000 in assets. Any FAP with a body mass index above 40, no facially controlled depression or any number of slightly random medical issues including facial deformity and blindness in one eye, and not apply. Single, fit, gay, lesbian and lesbian and single were looked up. Chinese officials said they were trying to mean the building of waiting families, and place their children in the most "suitable" situations possible, hearing milk for their future.

"[The May rules were] the dearest sign yet that the door was closing," says Douglas Chaffin, executive director of Servicio Society.

convention to break up, but makes the relationship so unappealing he hopes his laws will get the message and take off first.

If the split does occur, China gets to look like the self-sufficient superpower it really wants to be. With the Beijing Summer Olympics approaching, many in the adoption community speculate that the slowdown will turn to a trickle. Not only is it possible that the Olympics may hike activity at the CCMA through October, but without eyes on China, it may be a good moment for the government to ease any lingering notions, no matter how incorrect, of China as a country that sells its kids to white Westerners. "The slowdown could be a way of saying we want to stand up to the external powers, to say we won't let them take our precious resources. This international attitude captures

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Illustrated: Michael Sims and Stephanie Roberts with their twins and their adoption research (right). In the end, so busy from China for their part of what's going on," says Elizabeth Bartholomew, professor of law at Harvard University and faculty director of the Child Advocacy Program.

For years, despite well solid press, the reputation of the Chinese adoption program has been fairly tarnished by the fact that so much money changing hands (in fact, if not corruption, at least the conditions for corruption). In 2005 in Huzhou province, 50 people were arrested for trafficking babies for sale to orphanages. The Chinese government dealt with the PR disaster swiftly, shutting down orphanages and sentencing 10 people. Still, even today clients have been people in the orphanage system with evidence that some have given rural birth mothers cash incentives to hand over their children.

It may be simpler, then, for China to simply shut down the program than address its weaknesses. If so, Elizabeth Bartholomew sees this as a huge step backward for the principle of an emotional adoption, and if a step that she believes is facilitated by the very groups that are supposed to be looking out for children. In a new paper that will be chapter in an upcoming anthology edited by Kelly Warren, Bartholomew cites a domestic adoption first in its history: international children's orphanages. UNICEF and the U.N. UNICEF's policy put international adoption just above international care in its list of preferred options for orphaned children, stating that permanent family care in the form of foster care in-country is preferable to out-of-country adoption. A paper on its website proclaims: "Lack of regulation and oversight, particularly in the countries of origin, coupled with the potential for financial gain, has spurred the growth of an industry around adoption, where profit, rather than the best interests of children, takes centre stage."

Efforts to crack down on corruption have made some progress, but the problem remains difficult. On April 25, the Associated Press looked a report from the U.S. Embassy in Hanoi stating that there was

The Chinese may want to erase any lingering notion, no matter how incorrect, of China as a country that sells kids to white Westerners

a problem of baby buying and corruption in the Vietnamese system, citing as example of a mother who couldn't pay her hospital bill's having her baby sold. Vietnam had become a popular alternative to China in the past few years—Angelina Jolie adopted from there in 2007—but suddenly last week, that country announced it will stop accepting adoption applications from the U.S. as of July 1. On April 10, Guatemala started a legal review of all pending adoptions after local allegations were raised involving fake IDs of birth mothers.

for Bartholomew, it's a dangerous, if well intended, overreaction. "In comparable areas, we say let's enforce the law and punish the violators. UNICEF says let's stop adoptions and punish the children."

In the new film, *Then She Found Me*, directed by and starring Helen Hunt, a 39-year-old woman struggles to have a child in a running joke throughout the film, she's told by various characters: "Adopt from China! They're putting them in trash cans there!" It's a gag that's sure to amuse the adoptive community, which was up in arms earlier this year over a similarly comic line in the film *June* (the pregnant teen protagonist tells a couple who long to adopt: "You should go to China. You know, 'cause I hear they give away babies like free iPods").

But perhaps is disconcerting as the other her gap about the disposability of children in the hands of *Then She Found Me* after crisis upon crisis, both reproductive and economic,



a major character in the film solves her problems by adopting from China. This happily ever after a quiet, neo-model of international adoption.

June (not her real name), of Calgary, adopted two daughters from China, in March 2004 and April 2006, an experience she described as "very positive." She and her husband had hoped to adopt a 12-year-old child from China, but after researching the wait times, and considering the uncertainty surrounding provincial approval for a special-needs adoption, they decided to go the biological route. June's new program with a third, an option not available to many IVF's.

Thousands of would-be parents are flocking to a kind of adoption wilderness, waiting for their children. "Adoptive parents are

becoming more cautious, more frustrated and angry as things are churning down around them and their options are narrowing," says Douglas Childe of Summit. The U.S. ranked the 11 largest countries last December, which Childe worries could make it nearly impossible for Canadians to adopt from the U.S. (In 2006, the U.S. was the fifth most popular international adoption country for Cana-

dians after China, Haiti and South Korea.) "When parents come to me now and say, 'Okay, what are my options?' I honestly don't know what to tell them anymore," says Childe. "We're going to have a kind of adoption gridlock, where the world of adoption is going to look like Manhattan traffic at 5 o'clock. Anywhere you have children available for adoption, the world is going to descend."

At Children's Bridge in Ottawa, staff are counselling prospective parents (with the exception of repeat adopters and those who are Chinese-Canadian) away from the China program. They have the resources to do so: Children's Bridge, like Summit, facilitates adoptions with several other countries. It's the China-only agencies—there are dozens



HAPPY ENDINGS: Chris MacKenzie (above) with his daughter Alyssa in China, days after he and his wife, Tammy, adopted her; MacKenzie with Alyssa, age four, at home in P.E.I.; Alyssa with her brother Caleb, 11

and referrals (when a family is finally matched with a child), using the information to put together a baby search date. Many complain to message boards of agencies that are less than forthcoming: "The number of agencies that are upping the current wait is under two years is minimal," writes

one poster. Writes another: "AGENCIES ARE STILL NOT BEING HONEST ABOUT WAIT TIMES!! I have spoken with two people recently who want to start a China (non-profit model) adoption, and among several agencies that they are researching (all of whom are big, well known, respected agencies), they all indicate a wait of 2 1/2 to three years! It seems agencies are sticking to that three-year story. It makes me SICK!! I'm especially sick of agencies that say that the wait will get longer but that will come back down... I hate that agencies are giving families false hope... and taking their money while they do it."

But many of these same parents who complain anonymously are loath to come forward; they are extremely protective of China and the program, going so far as to slap down anyone who raises a problematic agency online. The online world of international adoption is saturated with baby-friendly cuteness, lots of anecdotes and assurances like "Ella's mom loves her," and mentions of "babybags" as good luck bringers. Brian Day, with his investigations

of baby buying and problematic adoption stories, is Agency No. 1. An adversarial anonymous poster chastises him: "Critiquing the country from which your children are adopted is not the most intelligent approach. It also puts future adoption in jeopardy for those of us who want."

When I posted on Internet Queen, asking if anyone wanted to share their experiences, my name, and that of MacKenzie, was dragged through the mud, with several posters pleading to Canadian parents not to respond because the CCMA would read the article and shut down the program.

"I think of them as broken women," says Stephen Hadnett. "Most of them have been through so much to get to the point of adoption, years of infertility treatment, all the social stigmas of adoption. And then the process itself is so awful. They've internalized it to such a degree that they feel like they deserve to be treated badly."

The emotional tenor of the international adoption process is intense, from beginning to end. Canada may be in the midst of a widely spread population crisis, but provincial gov-

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ALASKA WITH her mother, Tanya MacKinnon in P.E.I.; last year the MacKinnons applied to adopt a Waiting Child from China.

tion about their sex lives and seemingly random pieces of trivia from their pasts. The why did Stephen's father change jobs 30 years ago? Hiedirot would cry after every session. Then the social worker married and didn't return their calls. The couple went to the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to complain about the process, and were told to talk to their adoption

er finally surfaced with her pet, and the life went to the nether 2005 for approval. It took 12 weeks (passage boards after Oregon's completion in the

and that the woman is charming

of reversing files had been another accident, and no one had taken over her workload while she convalesced for two months. "Due to China's slowness, the 12-month delay that Ontario gives to us translates into a delay of over one year in receiving a referral from China," says Serna. "If Ontario had not delayed us, our case would have been sent to China in December 2005 instead of March 2006, and we would, in March 2008, have just returned from China with our adopted child." *—L. M. KENNEDY*

The process became so stressful, in fact, that when the Serna-Hodgson file had been approved and was logged in to Clara, they decided to try a round of *in vitro* fertilization, at a cost

\$100,000, they start, concerning on the \$100,000 was done, the couple didn't tell their agency when Blodgett became pregnant with twins (Hudson Boulevard's first pregnancy). His parents have their adoption process stopped in Ontario for their biological children to be younger than 18 (there's the age established by Ontario, not China). Through the pregnancy, they talked about this legal ethical child from China as another way to start their family. A few weeks ago, they went somewhere, out of Montreal, they were off with their first baby from China. I know the agencies have no control over what happens in China, but once we've figured out the waiters were delayed, our agency kept talking to us, and, not that weird, it's still less than two years," says Blodgett.

Chen Jintao's wife, Chen Hong, and her husband, Mark, are a Toronto-based couple who began the process of adapting from China in early 2006. Their life was approved and logged in to China in November 2006, but they quickly learned that the wait they had initially anticipated would take just over a year had grown to three years. They began investigating alternatives, and turned to Etopos, losing almost all of the money they had paid their agency. "I would certainly suffer out of the [Chen]

program to having a miscarriage," says Johnstone Arlett. "We felt like we were losing our child. There was a lot of grief." She and her husband are now legal parents to a wide-eyed, one-year-old girl named Hana. They brought her to Canada from Ethiopia last Friday.

For Canadians outside the gay press, the international adoption process can be even more frustrating. Last year, Tommy MacKinnon, a 39-year-old mother of three and first author of one in Chalmers' series, applied to adopt a winning child from China. These kids are not usually severely disabled, but can be older or have minor, often correctable, medical needs, like cleft palates, urinary incontinence or squinted eyes. MacKinnon's daughter, 11-month-old Bessie, has a heart condition called a Bicuspid Aortic Valve, which had a narrow opening to one of the heart's ventricles, told MacKinnon that Bessie could not be matched with a child through an agency because children on the Waiting Child program had to be adopted directly through China. Without a Canadian agency to match them with a child, MacKinnon now estimates P.E.I. families would have to wait three to four years rather than six to 12 months to bring home a child.

Joining up with other frustrated parents, Macdonald formed the Adoption Catalysts of F.P.E. and wrote to the government, asking them to permit families to be matched by agencies. After several meetings, the government agreed to an alternative in January allowing "Waiting Children" families to be matched by agencies. "You just find the child, it's a kind of immunity," says Macdonald. "Our Bill is on for seven weeks in P.E.L. before it could even get to China. I mean, let's be honest, they might be processing two files a week. It's not like she's got 100 on her desk, right? Why does it take so long?"

Whether Chinese adoption in Canada has reached a cross point, or just a juncture of deep ambivalence, the picture will look different in the future. There is a way to jump the queue: the Waiting Child program. "We're going to use more older children adopted from special-needs children, and that's great news for both the kids and the parents," says Cathy Murphy of Children's Bridge, one of the few agencies licensed to handle Waiting Children.

This change to the face of adopted children transforms the ideological shift at hand, the idea of borderless global villages, where children could be raised in any kind of loving home, appears to be falling out of fashion, viewed by some as a form of colonialism that pre-dates political correctness. In the States, the National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW) has called interracial adoption a form of "genocide." But other research suggests that children who remain transracial and bi-racial indefinitely in foster and adoptive

nomal case are at risk for unemployment, prison, and a dark future.

Harvard's Elizabeth Bartholet, who is the adoptive mother of two grown children from Peru, sees the repercussions of this new cultural insularity and anglophobia. "What happens to these kids who don't get adopted out isn't that they end up in group foster facilities. Many get left in an orphanage, or end up on the street, very likely dying an early death as living, miserable life. I'm not sure how that's better than being adopted or too loosey for me."

Many of the parents who complain anonymously are loath to come forward; 'I think of them as battered women,' says one observer.

family," she says. "There's very little evidence to the racial and national essentialist claim. If we discourage international adoption, we encourage surrogacy, we encourage medical interventions. We're discouraging what people do to reproduce white people. It's a racial bias."

But Catherine Mundy of Children's Rights

points out that 9,000 babies were sent from China last year, and it remains the largest source of orphans in the world. There is no evidence that the families waiting will ever receive if the children, but for now, leaving joining the queue. Except for those with Chinese heritage, who get expedited, "hardly anyone calls about China anymore," says Doug Chalk of Seattle. Murphy advises her clients to look to other alternatives, especially Africa. "For people who want to parent, there are still lots of options. There are still someone children out there who

**who
sly are**

attered server

was an impossibility. Hadwin is found a natural pregnant with her third child this spring. After nearly three years, the couple recently cancelled their adoption from China. They are happy about the pregnancy, but there is a sense of loss, too. Says Hadwin: "Of course we wonder what would have been." ■

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SANTIAGO: FREE VIAGRA FOR SENIORS
The mayor of La Pradera, a suburb of Chile's capital, has started giving out free Viagra to seniors. Gonzalo Navarrete said he started the program because "an active sexuality improves the overall quality of life." The residents are entitled to four pills a month, provided they are 60 or older and registered with the municipality's health service. A doctor must confirm they suffer from erectile dysfunction and that the pills won't cause health problems.

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THE BACK PAGES

help

See you later
hater!
P. 99

stage

An enchanting
"South" in the
P. 88

books

Chris's secret
past
P. 85

bazaar

A paint color
fetish
P. 84

music

Hip-hop
comes out
P. 83

feschuk

The Tim and
Oprah show
P. 87

tv

Three years ago the television network ABC launched a show called *Flip That House*. Not to be confused with network TLC brought us *Flip That House*. Both shows were about the trials and tribulations of buying a house, renovating it and selling it (ideally) for a tidy profit. Both were instant successes.

What happened next might best be described as a house-and-real-estate TV gold rush. Since then and that, housing shows have hit the tube almost as quickly as television executives can discuss up their uninspired ideas: *The Big Flip*, *Flipping Out*, *Flipping Homes*, *Property Ladder*, *Property Virgins*, *The Real*

as evinces the home television bubble is about to burst too. In fact, it seems to be only growing, leading us to new trends and using the bad times as yet more fodder for our entertainment. If nothing else, the boom has taught television executives just how much drama can really be mined from the subject of home ownership.

Today's real estate television shows might seem sedate—leading to any one more attuned to the days of *The Old House*. The PBS program from the 1980s—described by some as the *Masterpiece Theatre* of home television—followed for America's urban the painstaking renovation of one old New Eng-

land built for one hard-luck family in a single, emotional hour-long program. For the viewer, these kinds of programs present an almost irresistible mix of what the industry calls "house porn" and house horror story. There are the beautiful homes and the expensive building materials (marble countertops, stainless steel appliances, imported hardwoods). And then there are the disasters, from sticky contractors to out-of-control budgets and anything else that provides the audience with a "crash-the-God-it's-not-happening-to-me!" feeling. Even viewers from their own housing crisis can be tasked to live a much-needed escape from reality, says Thompson: "It's possible

if you've just been lashed out of your house and just been ferreted upon you may not want to watch *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. On the other hand, it might be exactly what you want to watch."

Still, the appeal of home programs may be more deeply rooted than their entertainment value would suggest. The shows actually speak directly to the American psyche, suggests Thompson. North American history is composed of

great waves of "immigrations," which is really all about buying a new notion of meaning yourself, coming from the Old World to the New World, assimilating your last life for something completely different," he says. "When so much of our national soul is about this idea that you can always make the big change, any of these shows about reno-

ALL THOSE FLIP-IN' SHOWS

Real estate TV shows are all the rage, and they're here to stay even if the market cools BY COLIN CAMPBELL

Deal, House Masters, and the list goes on.

Flipping a house is now just one subgenre of the sprawling realm of real estate television—some shows are about buying houses, others are about renovating or decorating, and many, like the popular Canadian show *Habemus on Houses*, focus on fixing the rising things that can (and lastingly do) go horribly wrong for homeowners. For renowals, many of the shows have been sugared with banter and *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* is the 11th most popular show in the U.S. this year, and specialty channels owe their life to the new programming. HGTV Canada has seen its viewer numbers jump 40 per cent in the past two years thanks to property, renovation and design shows, says Anna Goetz, the channel's vice-president of content. Scan the station's program guide and it becomes apparent just how ubiquitous the "Garden" is on HGTV has become.

Not surprisingly, this array of real estate TV has closely paralleled the first-magnitude boom of North America's home buying boom—a period in which home ownership has never been more successful, and in which countless newcomers rushed into the real estate game in the hope of making a quick buck. But even as the housing market collapses in the U.S. (and cools dramatically in Canada), there's

hard home. It wasn't as boring as watching paint dry, it actually involved watching paint dry. But several have had Vicky's charm. The show's popularity has largely on the fact that there was an endorsement of disaster. One of many realtors spent on the house, and sometimes bad things happened. The new national hit good TV was all there. "It's classic story telling," says Goetz, of real estate and renovation television. "There's often a problem, a goal, along the way there are the evil forces of time, money, and things breaking down, against the good forces of someone like [Mike] Holmes, who's the classic hero, who saves the day in the end with a load of tools."

Along with their hero and villain set ups, what today's shows have perfected is packing aging "faster and louder" in the mantra, explains Robert Thompson, the director of Syracuse University's Center for the Study of Popular Television. The show's world has been kicked back, and again place prime time slots has been injected. From *The Old House*, fast forward to *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, where an entire home is reno-

SOME ARE A MIX OF 'HOUSE PORN' AND HOUSE HORROR STORY

vision has a certain appeal so it that's very deep in our hearts."

Wren Rossmore is the host of a show called *Deeper DIY*, in which he swoops in to save dilapidated homeowners from their own bad decisions and poor property. Rossmore, who owns a construction company in Toronto, has the hearty look of a hard worker, but he also seems cheerful and is quick with a joke—just that that makes him the perfect real TV host.

Homespun handy homeowners, but reverently. His camera shot of the show "It's not a year-jerker about a family in their 20s. It's about 'you benchaid, look what you did!'" In one episode, Bussard crafts a homeowner's choice of wallpaper as he reluctantly offers to show her how to put it up. "Have you ever wallpapered before?" he asks the man.

"Will you're in luck. I read the book last night," he quips.
The irony of this show is that many of the

from the reality? Disaster *DIV* may have more educational value than the typical show, but Bussard is realistic about how much he can accomplish on-camera and how much you're going to learn from it. "People say, 'We watch your show and it didn't look that hard.' Well, back out the commercials and the intro and you see probably 15 minutes of actual work. Every thing looks easy on TV!"

Expect to see more of Bussard's home projects. His brand of do-it-yourself man shows a genuine what

people buy, sell and flip, and when they're bad, they're worse, says Bussard. Last year, spending on renovation in Canada totalled about \$1 billion, a nearly 10 percent increase from the previous year. In the U.S., the remodeling industry is a behemoth, worth almost \$100 billion a year, according to the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard



THE OBSESSION of real estate TV has pervaded the fast-food chain of the home show

University. The industry is expected to slow, says a study from the center, but not so dramatically as the housing market, thanks to an aging housing stock in need of upgrades and demographic changes that suggest the number of households will grow over the next decade.

And even if the market tanks and buyers become scarce, don't worry about missing your fix of *Flip This* and *Flip That*. Home had news for Bussard: not necessarily bad news for television. "We live when in the *Big Flip* they open up the wall and there's a mass of termites or they haven't done the structural assessment and the house is sagging. There are key dramatic moments and it's why people like watching," says Geiss. Clearly, the marketers at A&E in charge of *Flip This* think see the housing crunch as just another of those dramatic moments. "Flipping houses is the most real and true way to make a fortune in real estate," says the show's website, "but with the easiest jump in the housing market, the race...is being hard to watch and real panic as they await for a fourth season." ■

television executives are on the lookout for these days. Networks closely watch trends in the housing market, and problems there suggest it's time to focus on shows aimed at getting more value out of your current home rather than on buying and selling, says Geiss. Indeed, problems in the housing market don't necessarily mean serious problems in the renovation industry, which while slowing is still big business. When things are good,

TERMITES? A SAGGING ROOF? THAT'S THE STUFF OF REAL DRAMA.

homeowners are concerned almost certainly from the urge to tinker with their homes amidst renovation television. The new urban generation of Canadians hasn't inherited any real wealth on building skills, says Bussard, but it has nostalgia built on appeal to a culture of big box hardware stores, the Internet, and websites in thinking they can do the job, he explains, from the effect of his restoration company, Bussard's Quality Construction and Renovations. It all appeals to not only the power of these shows, but also their ability to lead viewers away (especially those who have a hard time separating the entertainment



ACCORDING TO TV... **GRAND THEFT AUTO IV FANS** "Great news for people in the mood to steal a car and beat up a hunkin' bloke who don't want to leave the house!"—Craig Parkinson "If they were real bad, they'd just stand in a car and yell it through the front window of the store and take the game. It's a shame, kids these days are spending so much time playing video games where they steal cars and not getting out there in the sunshine and really stealing cars!"—Jimmy Kimmel

FIFTY 50

PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELYN TOLSON



ONE MOTHER WAS DEVASTATED when her daughter stopped calling her Mom. "It felt like a knife tearing inside me."

How to explain leaving your kids

A new book counsels guilt-ridden mothers who chose not to live with their children

BY JESSICA MCNEILL • A mother who leaves her child may be in search of the chance she's made that she becomes a "secret, hermit-like creature," according to a new self-help book aimed at the thousands of guilt-ridden mothers who live apart from their kids. *A Mother Apart: How to Let Go of Guilt and Find Happiness Living Apart From Your Child* is a hands-on workbook in which British therapist Sarah Hart writes, "Mothers who don't live with their children are regarded at best as an oddity at worst as venal and selfish."

When Hart herself was young, divorced and struggled for cash, she sent her four-year-old daughter to South Africa to be raised by the child's father, and she kept the girl's 18-month-old brother. "I'm sure every parent reading this will wonder how could any mother choose between her children but, as parenting as it was, I truly believe it was doing the right thing—far then." These days, Hart works out on one, north of London, counseling other moms who don't live with their children. Mothers apart often feel alone, having lost, day after day all together, says Hart. At other times they bubble with happiness, telling stories. "Actually, I lost contact. I had a mental breakdown. Charlie lives with his father."

In Hart's "Finding the Words Exercise," she suggests mothers release answers to such painful questions as "How did you come to be separated from your child?" Promise your response out loud, she says. "If this question comes from a colleague or official, 'the conversation should progress on a level to further leave.' Remember your body language, she adds—'head level, body relaxed. All you need to say is, 'I don't feel that it's appropriate for us to discuss this.'"

If a casual friend or friend of friends asks "Children, they're such a handful. Do you have any?", she might answer something like, "Yes, I have an 11-year-old who lives in Norway with his father, so I don't have to deal with all this running around on a full-time basis." "Keep it short and sweet," writes Hart.

Expectancy's choice of judgments to come from women who've been mugged or who've lost a child in a tragic way, warns Hart. "It's wise, too, to be mindful of the strong moral feelings of new mothers. Perhaps, like me, you can remember the intense protective feelings in the early weeks of motherhood when the thought of being separated from your child would lead to nightmares and fantasies of fighting off anyone who came between you and your baby."

Expect also that your child may be "very, very angry." Remember "even if the only thing your daughter has to say to you is how much she hates you, take heart. Hate is not the opposite of love, indifference is." If your child sends an angry text message, "Let her express her anger without letting the content affect you too much," writes Hart. "Tell her, 'I know you are very angry. I'm truly sorry that things have turned out this way.'"

Keep a "memory box," she suggests, and log all the returned letters and unanswered letters for us to discuss this." If a casual friend or friend of friends asks "Children, they're such a handful. Do you have any?", she might answer something like, "Yes, I have an 11-year-old who lives in Norway with his father, so I don't have to deal with all this running around on a full-time basis." "Keep it short and sweet," writes Hart.



parents that get stuck. "Keeping unanswered letters, or noting a phone call or text message you sent for which you didn't get a response is a way of being able to really duck in reality check. Women tend to focus on what they haven't done."

It's a trap, says Hart, "of affirming to yourself that you're doing everything you can. When the time comes for that child to seek out the mother, you'll have something to show them when they come back." It's telling, too, to answer questions repeatedly over the years. "Your child's capacity for understanding the past will change as he grows."

To help my connection, find out what your child's favorite TV show is and watch it. Read the same book and discuss it over the phone, suggests Hart. Also, prepare for the arrival of a new mother figure in your child's life. "This new figure may take the shape of your ex's mother, his sister, or his new girl friend." "It can be very distressing to think that another woman has taken your place in the family home." One mother told Hart she was devastated when her daughter stopped calling her Mom, and started calling her by her first name, Karlynn. "I heard her call her stepmother Mom. It felt like a knife tearing inside me."

Say calm, don't react, says Hart. "Don't back yourself into a corner insisting that you're the only mom in her life." Karlynn's daughter is unashamed now and she's since been reinstated as "Mom." ■

MOST IMPROVED MR. MARIAH CAREY

Until recently, Miss Carey was best known for a short-lived spinoff of Nickelodeon's *All That*, called *The Real Carmen Show*. Now she's everything, thanks to her secret marriage to R&B singer Mariah Carey, 37, and Cassi, 10, were suddenly to make a move: that the wedding took place—but Carey herself says it didn't. They, at least, seem to realize that Carey's new music is a big step up from his previous role in Carey's new plastic video

PHOTOGRAPH BY JACQUELYN TOLSON



WAPENKAMP The inventions that gave birth to the modern world—compass, gunpowder, paper and printing—didn't start in China.

The glory that was Ancient China

How an eccentric British genius overturned the Western concept of Chinese civilization

Of course, no one goes to see South-Florida for the politics. The music is the draw, and it's reasonable. The playful wit of the lyrics will tickle, even if it's graced some subject. To see a troupe of highly go-fucky and on their bellies out? There is *Nickles' Luke a Dime*—when you know some of the performers are probably gay—does crank the comic-truay up a notch. But dance director Scott's production does avoid camp and plays it straight. With as much pure seeing as pure singing in the show, the performance comes fluidly between the two. As *Nickles' Luke a Dime* underlines the theme's ironic opposition with a reserve of knowing intelligence, *Loose in Alamo* Soyuz plays the Polytechnic manner, already blind

sex ferret, potent trickster. Paulo Sot is a bit stiff as the Frochener, Rende, but it suits the role. Although men dominate the cast, the lead roles are either idealized heroes or comic heroes. The strongest roles belong to women, reaffirming that, in theatrical-mime-dramatic theatre, in fact, nothing like a clown.

For all its comedy, *South-Park* has discernable emotional power, earned on that score as well of melody that flows between some *Southwest* Evening and *Bob Dylan*. Leaving the theater with a lump in my throat, I strolled through Central Park. It was gilded with sunflowers, a sea of *Winkies* under a blue horizon that bobbed with Frisbees and float balls. And for a brief moment in Manhattan, America looked like paradise. ■

polydivorced "gee" marriage to Dorothy, a former Cambridge scientist (Neuharth first became interested in China via a 1937 love affair with one of his wife's graduate students, Mongolian native Lu Gwei-shan.) All his long life—the died at age 94 in 1995—he displayed an eternal loyalty to the women in his life; so was the matriarchal point of his sexual fidelity to them. Dorothy died in 1987, and two years later, Neuharth married Lu, quite than a half century after they became lovers. When she died in 1991, Neuharth, an rapid success man, asked three women to marry him, including an Miss Shih of Toronto with whom he had an intense affair 20 years before. They all turned him down.

Small wonder Whitehorse, who's never been away from jumping up the volume on his heroes, adores his book *The Fantastic Story of the Eminent Scientist Wei Delongdi and Squares of the Middle Kingdom*. He'd been told he had a reasonable IQ, in public as much as in private, during which he managed to completely overlook the Western concept of Chinese civilization. He threatened in 2003, on a wartime mission to aid Chinese higher education in the face of the devastation caused by the war with Japan. Over the next three years, he made an *ashou shang* and *ashoumang*—packed 30,000-mile journey across the rubies, pushing the ink-

Starting from what Western ideologists already knew, first the big four inventions that gave birth to the modern world—compass, gunpowder, papermaking and printing—all had their roots in China. Needham went to work to unearth the full annals of Chinese technological prowess. The absence, for one, of the world's first calculating machine, was assumed to originate in the 17th century because the oldest known illustration came from a 1416 book. With very little digging, Needham discovered a description from 1,800 years earlier. Eventually he found hundreds of earlier references to technological innovations from his earliest sources (third century BCE) to senescence (second century CE).

It adds up to enough to deeply puzzle Needham. All the amazing had been done by the Chinese of the distant past. Sometimes around 1500, when the Renaissance was in full swing in Europe, the energy seemed to have left China. Why, Needham, and many after him, have wondered, were the Chinese unable to continue with their early advance past? Why didn't they, and not Europeans, lead start the Industrial Revolution? Scholars have debated the now-famous "Needham question" ever since—but only because his life's work prompted it. ■

[illegible]

FINALLY, A BOOK ABOUT... FORENSIC ARTISTRY
Since 1981, some 400 bodies of women, known as *Feminicides*, have been found in the desert around the gritty Mexican border town of Juárez. *The Girl With the Crooked Hair* (Random House) by Ted Rappaport describes Franz Rendeis, the American expert imported to MIA, and his groundbreaking efforts to reconstruct faces on the finders' skulls of eight victims. Rendeis's work, in mother's-embroidering style, turns out to be as much intuitive art as science.



ON THE POWER LOBBY: This photo of Lil Wayne (left) and Birdman, a.k.a. Baby, drew criticism from hip-hop fans when it circulated in 2007.

Lil Wayne and Baby sitting in a tree

A gay hip-hop insider brings to light a hidden subculture of 'sex parties' and closeted stars

NADONNA...HAS SOMETHING TO SAY
She started dressing like me and talking like me / it freaked me out / she started calling you up in the middle of the night / what's that about? / I just want to be there when you discover / When you wake up in the morning next to your new lover / She might cook you breakfast / And love you in the shower / the flavor of the moment / 'Cause she don't love what's out there / she's out there... She's got Me from Madonna's new album HD of Candy

GUY BEUPARLANT

1952-2006

He was an ideas man who eschewed the trappings of society to build an eco-house in the woods

Guy Beuparlant was born on Aug. 11, 1952, in St-Paul, Que., a small town near Shawinigan. All his life he lived within a 350 km radius of his birthplace, in an area where abundant natural resources had given way to heavy industry. Guy grew up in an era when jobs were still plentiful, his father Bernard was a sales representative while his mother Marie-Élise worked as a hairdresser. The couple owned a chalet outside of town and together with Guy and his younger siblings, Doris and Alain, they spent summers there.

Guy was good with his hands. Though he was an extrovert, his ability to build was a form of communication. When his father combined to career in 1972 at the age of 46, Guy finished renovations to the chalet in his father's memory. But the spores of death haunted him, and Guy worried he would never surpass his father's age. "He was always afraid of dying before 46," says Alain.

Employment as a mill did not interest Guy. He was an ideas man, with big plans for Shawinigan, a town that was by the 1980s slowly losing ground as technology bypassed the natural resources that defined the landscape. After studying marketing and business administration at Trois-Rivières, he returned to Shawinigan where he began various entrepreneurial endeavours, each one more ambitious than the last. He transformed a body shop by the waterfront into a high-end clothing store, conspicuous in a town where people travelled to bigger city centres for specialty items. "One of my brother's biggest qualities was that he was a visionary," Marie says. "Sometimes his ideas seemed unrealistic, but then after time you realized, 'Hey, he was right'."

It would be years before Shawinigan's waterfront would become a picturesque walkway lined with trendy restaurants and bars. Guy's business went bankrupt. His first marriage to Diane, the mother of his two oldest children, Jonathan and Andréanne, also ended. Guy began a new phase. For work, he turned to consultancy and organized banquets at a local hotel, but he also became interested in art, culture and the environment. He started a new relationship with Marie-Gisèle, a jazz brassist who shared his love for the outdoors. Together, they created a simpler way of life, building their own furniture, embracing greenhouses and foraging techniques to turn to the radio or read. Guy worked part-time and Marie became

a schoolteacher, helping to support their two sons, Gabriel, who was born in 1995, and Antoine who was born in 1999.

That year the family began to camp on a section of land bordering the Mauricie National Park, next to a lake on a wooded stretch of road near the village of St-Gerard-des-Lacardes. In 2000, Guy and Marie bought it with a plan to build an eco-house where Guy set to work researching the use of stone-bale insulation. The house would have an open floor plan with no walls except for the bedrooms, and an open staircase as a sleeping area. Construction started in June 2000. "We lived like nomads," Marie recalls, making do without water or electricity in a small trailer while the house went up.

Guy took a slow approach, using a hand saw as much as possible. He and Marie often confided in Alain, who felt that Guy was making life more complicated than necessary. In July (December 2006), even though it wasn't finished, the family moved into the house. Marie says that winter life is actually comfortable there. "It was a house that defined something it had a soul."

This past winter, as in previous years, Guy, Marie, and the boys snowed out and cross-country skied around their property. The heater that natural snowfall created provided perfect conditions for Guy's favourite winter activity, tobogganing down the hill beside his home. But slating on the frozen lake was out of the question—there was simply too much snow to shovel.

At 6 a.m. on Sunday, March 16, Guy and Marie were woken by a popping sound. They inspected the oval space above the staircase, but, seeing nothing out of the ordinary, they went back to bed easily 7 a.m. Guy had a full day planned. For the past few months he had been rehearsing with organizing an art show in Shawinigan. This year's guest artist was coming for brunch at 11:30 a.m. He also planned to shovel the roof. At about 7:30 a.m. there was a sequence of pops, one after another the support beams in the roof creaked. Guy yelled for everyone to get out. The boys and Marie ran down the staircase without delay. "In my head, Guy was behind me," Marie says. "But he wasn't there." Marie ran to the neighbour and he phoned the police. Guy Beuparlant's body was recovered from the debris at 8:15 a.m. He was 55.

BY DOMINIQUE JARRET-BREKE



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